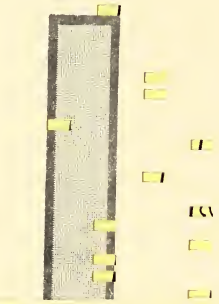
OLIVER HAZARD PERRY
and
The War on The Lakes



Frank Culbertson.

Commodore Oliver Hazard Perry

and

The War on the Lakes

By

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"The Trail of the Grand Seigneur," etc.

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CHAPTER I

ROOT AND BRANCH

"WE HAVE met the enemy and they are ours."

It is a national slogan, passed in perpetuity down through the generations that own allegiance to this iron-thewed, majestic young giant of the West, the United States of America. First learned in the schoolroom, it may lie dormant in some dark cranny of the brain in the after-time, when the boy has become a man and is battling with the world in search of pelf or power or whatever bubble he pursues; but let that phrase once more chance to fall beneath his eye, though he be gray and grim with the conflict, across the gap of years there sweeps the odd, remembered thrill, and he tingles to his finger-tips. For it is through the immortal inspiration of such traditions that the men of a nation hold in fee their birthright, a birthright that demands and receives the sacrifice of blood and brain and brawn for the simple, God-sent joy of giving them. Indeed, the

divine spirit of patriotism itself furnishes a crushing refutation of the materialist's contention of the non-existence of a soul.

Words are pigments, mixed as may be, to be splashed, with more or less regard for art and truth, upon the scroll of finite achievement. The hopeless tyro of the studio, in a series of tentative dabs, can but feebly approach artistic canons, while the power of genius guides the brush of the master in a few free, all-potent strokes that make of the dead, blank canvas a thing of life, of virile power and beauty. And so with words. It was Stevenson who wrote:

> "Bright is the ring of words
> When the right man rings them,"

and it is well worth while to consider a moment how few strokes of a pen have served certain word-painters among the conquerors of the past to frame messages of odds o'ercome which electrified their generation, and, as enduring classics, will continue ringing down the grooves of time. Brief they are, but their brevity holds all in all; they thrill the soul with the glory, the completeness, of the tale that is told. Because of the splendid epitome of effort which they

spell, they become the deathless heritage of men. Their very brevity the more bespeaks the simple grandeur of the great minds that framed them, minds that busied themselves more with the details of herculean labors to be performed than with the subsequent record of their accomplishment.

That some of these briefly glorious messages seem closely related, one to the other, is not strange. The souls of such men are kin. Simplicity and directness, in the use of the quill as in all else, is characteristic of the truly great. Therefore, if the stripling of Put-in Bay, when he penned his triumphant messages to Harrison and Jones, did adopt as a model a previous laconic document, dispatched under like circumstances by the greatest of England's sea-fighters, what does it indicate? Only that the younger man was in gallant company and that his intrepid soul was cast in the same simple, heroic mold. The conclusions reached by certain captious historians must inevitably end in this. And as before Perry there was Nelson, so before Nelson was the world-winning Caesar, whose "*Veni, vidi, vici,*" may well serve as a graphic model of modest brevity, while time

endures, for all the sons of men with virility enough, in any field, to conquer the sullen world. Mere words are sufficient for the conqueror. It is only the defeated apologist who requires reams.

It is the breathing, embodied soul of action, dynamic and irresistible, that insures immortality to words like these. It has been so from the beginning. The lion heart, that knew not how to quail or swerve, has swayed the world —and the ages have remembered. Power rules, and for it there exists universally and forever the fixed and changeless instinct of primal admiration. Centuries ago Rome roared at the sight of the gladiator throttling the wild beast in the arena; just as to-day an American crowd goes mad at the savage plunge into opposing humanity of a young giant in moleskins, with a pigskin ball under his arm. Time and the peoples change, but not the basic principles of being. It is to-day as yesterday: The soul is enthralled at the sight of might unleashed, of savage battling against resisting odds. The fierce tide of exultation sweeps over the throng in mighty waves, and the resultant roar narrows astoundingly the gulf of time

between the present and the dim, primordial Stone Age. Why? Because the mimic struggle is typical. It is elementary; therefore it is life.

Of the peoples of to-day there is no nation whose sons are more potently exerting those unresting energies which move the world, than these united brethren of states, the strength of the West. There is no field in which the American has not left the impress of his individuality and tireless zeal. If an alien is minded to dispute this nation's category of virtues, there is one that he will not presume to decry. It is the saving grace of unwearied energy, the gift of eternally keeping at it, the gift that brings results. In a little more than a century, this virtue has been demonstrated through the gamut of human endeavor, in war and peace, and the American is as aggressive in the pursuits of one as the other. And more, for the will to do which dominates the national character, the will that has welded the land in a common bond of sympathetic interest, is also the will that originally weaned the infant from its mother and guided it aright in a separate way.

It is not strange, this development of re-

source, when one considers the character of its forerunners, those good, old original advance agents of prosperity. It has benefited the world but little, and that unfortunate continent least of all, that the Spaniards, after fruitless missions to the northward, flocked to South America. On the other hand, it is fortunate for the world in general, and this nation in particular, that the trail to true progess upon the Northern Continent was originally blazed by Englishmen. Stout arms and hearts, a love alike for God and liberty, had those old pioneers. Undismayed by the fearful odds against them, they remained where others would have fled. Multiplying like the green things of the spring, as every ship brought recruits, they stayed on. The enshrouding trees fell before their axes, while the red men sullenly gave way, slipping farther and farther back from the borders into the ever-narrowing green heart of the virgin forest. And in the train of these first Englishmen there came gradually the best blood, the brawn and brain of the common people of the more stable of the European lands, whose advent spelled force and all the resultant recompense of unremitting toil. And so on till the

awakening, the blood-pact of those signers of the Declaration; the triumph; the stress and victories and growth of the ensuing years. To-day the aborigine is a fading dream, and the broad land he loved, harnessed and webbed with steel, serves the Caucasian and the world. With the blood of England mingled the best strains of other lands, and the red streams flowed from the east across a continent to the tide of the western sea. The land too young, too raw for traditions, forsooth? Youth such as this may have them. It is a national history, unique in the record of a world.

While many a man who has done things worth doing in the world is unable to give one the detailed particulars of his genealogical tree, it is probable that, could he trace back through the generations, he would find that he owed something of his success to the transmitted inheritance of heredity. Perhaps those early ones occupied a position unvaryingly ordinary, even lowly as viewed by the somewhat undiscriminating eyes of the world, but there was probably a constantly recurring something of courage and capacity. In the case of the subject of this sketch, however, one is under

no necessity to waste time in vague speculation. Oliver Hazard Perry was the logical sequence of useful generations.

He was the son of Christopher Raymond and Sarah Perry and was born Aug. 21, 1785, at South Kingston, Washington County, State of Rhode Island. This town is situated on Narragansett Bay, opposite Newport, and succeeding generations of its inhabitants have distinguished themselves in nautical lines. With other intrepid souls of that devoted State, they shared the youthful Perry's toils and subsequent victory, and "Little Rhody's" part in that thrilling tale is out of all proportion to her diminutive size, for it was her sons that the young commander carried with him up to Lake Erie. They, with the aid of a few others, under his directions created from the convenient forest and equipped the fleet whose ensuing record figured so momentously in that war.

The father of Oliver was the son of the Hon. Freeman Perry, who led a most useful career. His pursuits were in the quiet paths of peace, and he held during a long life many posts of trust. Originally a clerk in the county court, he eventually served in a judicial capacity. He

died at the age of eighty-two at South Kingston in October, 1813, the month following the brilliant exploit of his grandson.

A brief survey of the American Commodore's line of ancestry indicates the unerring destiny of generic influences. On the maternal side he was descended in a direct line from William Wallace, fearless warrior, whose name will endure while remains the Scotland for which he battled. This strain alone would account for the sequence of Erie, for the Scot possesses in amazing degree the cardinal virtue of unflagging zeal. The grim resolve to do or die, that filled the heart of Robert Bruce, the stout heart that was buried by his coutrymen in the land he loved, actuates in as full measure the preacher in his pulpit, the inventor in his garret, and all the imposing host, from warriors to writers, from scientists to philosophers, from financiers to legislators, that Scotland has given to the world. No matter what the object may be, the national character demands the employment of activity until the realization of attainment. It was Scotch persistence that won for the world Lord Byron's "English Bards and Scotch Reviewers."

In the paternal line, Oliver's great-great grandfather was a native of Wales. He had three sons, Samuel, Edward and Benjamin, who emigrated to the new land of America. Samuel and Edward were among those early settlers of Plymouth, while Benjamin, the youngest and the lineal ancestor of Oliver, went further south and settled at South Kingston, Rhode Island. He had two sons, Edward and Freeman, and two daughters, Mary and Susan. Freeman, the grandfather of Oliver, had seven children. Christopher Raymond, his third son and the father of Oliver, was born at South Kingston in 1761. Despite his youth, at the outbreak of the Revolution he became an active participant, and bore a most honorable part in the struggle. Beginning in the naval service, he was first a seaman on board an American privateer, later volunteering on the Trumbull, a public war vessel. Afterward as a volunteer aboard a sloop of war, the Miflin, under the command of George Wait Babcock, he and his mates were captured by the British. For three months, with many others, he endured the torments of the loathsome Jersey prison-ship. While immured, he suffered an attack of fever which

nearly proved fatal. He was liberated and returned home to recruit his health. Impatient for further action, he entered the service of a private armed brig, commanded by Captain Rathbone. While in the English Channel the ship was captured. Young Perry was now imprisoned in England for eighteen months. Finally escaping from confinement, he embarked for St. Thomas, and from there for Charleston, reaching his native shore at about the time peace negotiations were concluded.

After peace was restored he followed his favorite maritime pursuits. He was employed in the East India and other trades until about 1798, when he was appointed to the command of the U. S. ship General Green, performing several cruises, principally on the West India station. He continued in public service till the reduction of the marine in 1801. Following this he was appointed Collector of Revenue for the First District of Rhode Island. The brief record indicates that the gallant father of a famous son had himself suffered danger and hardship in the service of his land and met them with the courage of a worthy line.

In 1783 Christopher Perry married Sarah

Alexander Wallace. The year previous she had come from Scotland, as a passenger, to Philadelphia, under the protection of Matthew Calbraith, in the vessel of which the subsequent captain was then mate. Of this union there were born eight children, Oliver Hazard, Raymond Henry, Matthew Calbraith and James Alexander, all of whom entered the naval service, Nathaniel Hazard and three daughters. Christopher Raymond Perry died June 1, 1818.

Oliver was destined by his father for the sea. The selection by the parent of the child's future field of effort is too often a breeder of subsequent chaos and general dissatisfaction. But if the homely phrases of "like father, like son," and "a chip of the old block," hold true, no such unhappy consequences are likely to attend the fiat. In this case the boy was his father's son in his love for the sweep of tides, in his admiration for those who go down to the sea in ships. A touch was sufficient to bend the twig, for so was the future tree inclined.

It is an inspiring Omnipotence Who sends us day-dreams in the morning of our lives, flashes of sunlight athwart the brightened page of youth. Few there are to whom those fleet-

ing visions of the springtime did not seem gloriously, startlingly alive; few who are not in some degree the better for them in the after years. True, the swift fading of the vision in the ardent eyes of the boy was wont, in the early time, to leave the soul chilled with a sense of the gray realities of that present which youth is ever so impatient to outgrow for the beckoning future.

But that childish dream in passing leaves a hope behind, a hope that grows and grows, that reaches out wistfully into the unknown, that burns with a steady glow. The warm glow lures once again the dream and fosters it, so that it lingers, reluctant to depart, and when it again withdraws from the lodgment that Hope prepared for it, it is with tears, while Hope droops, pining. Let the youth now guard well his heavy heart, where Hope lies grieving, lest the mourner slip out like a ghost into the emptiness in search of the vanished dream, and both be lost to him forever. Let him unweariedly nourish the invalid till Hope, renewed, once more kindles the fire upon the hearthstone and the rays of the beacon are streaming through the window. Be assured that the

dream, tired of the outer cold and darkness, will once more return, this time to abide with Hope, forever. And the dream, backed by Hope, will conquer the world.

Vague and formless at the first may have been the dreams of the boy who once gazed out from the shore over the green field of the waters of Narragansett Bay, childish questioning in the eyes that wondered because of the unresting, eternal mystery of the sea. Vague and formless at the first, and we have no knowledge of what they were, but because we who are men were once boys, and remember it, we know that they came to him. Indeed, to a veritable clod, the sweep of the sea would bring them, though he did but dully sense their witcheries. And to the heart and soul of the boy who was to become the man of Put-in Bay, we may be sure there came such thrilling ambitions, such swelling aspirations, as are born of the sight of wide waters and endless tides, of the smell of briny winds.

Accounts tell us that Oliver in early youth was not robust and gave little promise of the splendid physical equipment with which nature was to endow him with advancing maturity.

It appears that as a child he was one of that large constituency who are temporarily enfeebled by too rapid growth. In his earlier years his health was for some time an object of parental solicitude, but as he grew older the influence of a naturally inherited strong constitution asserted itself and he developed a fine physique, which grew stronger and more vigorous as he approached manhood.

As for his mental qualities, it is related that from the first he evidenced that lively curiosity to learn regarding matters which he did not understand, that should invariably be a source of satisfaction to parents, despite the natural annoyance entailed by the patient answering of hordes of children's questions. When he became of an age suitable for books, he turned to them readily and developed a genuinely studious bent. As for his education, the advantages he received, the best his parents could give him, were not of the highest, though he made the most of them up to the time when, as a mere youth, he began his practical training in the matters of the sea. He was principally educated in the town of Newport, where he attended the best schools that community afforded. It is

told of him that he was very studious and showed great proficiency in the several branches of learning to which he applied himself. In a word, he devoted himself to his school duties with the same zeal that he later showed in the stern tasks of life.

In writing of the Commodore's youth, a contemporaneous historian said of him: *

"We shall not claim that he was born a great man, but that he became such from a judicious and successful use of the powers given him and from a concurrence of circumstances, affording an opportunity for a display of those powers. As a boy he was remarkably sedate and thoughtful, and the circumstance may be considered as in some measure a presage of his future career. It may be deemed so as much as any other, but no characteristic of a child can indicate the character of the man, as that depends upon a great variety of causes, some of which are more or less fortuitous in their nature and cannot be controlled by human foresight. . . . . A mind naturally serious, thoughtful and inquiring is seldom destitute of capacity and energy, and when these qualities are discernible

* Life of Perry, John M. Niles. Hartford, 1821.

in youth . . . . . they may be considered as affording a promise of future talents, character and usefulness which few other characteristics disclose."

Christopher Raymond Perry had designed his son for the navy, and Oliver's school days, though well improved by the boy, were short. He finished them at fourteen, an age when the average boy of to-day, who is expected by his parents to take the full course, is struggling along in about the middle of it. But it was at fourteen that Oliver Hazard Perry left the schoolroom to begin his studies in the great, grim university of life, studies that were to yield him a diploma and degree imperishable in the annals of the nation.

CHAPTER II

GROWTH

IT WAS under the tutelage of his father that young Perry entered upon his training in naval matters. Christopher Raymond Perry was at that time in command of the General Green, and in April, 1799, young Oliver, vested with the dignity of a midshipman's warrant, went aboard her. The Havana station was the object of the General Green's first cruise. She returned July 27 following, having in the interim convoyed over fifty merchantmen, bound to various United States ports. It was intended to continue longer, but a contagion which broke out among the crew compelled Captain Perry to return home. It was during this cruise that Oliver had his first lessons in practical seamanship. It is recorded that he proved a ready pupil, and the result satisfied his father that his expectations regarding the son's aptitude for matters maritime would be realized, a conclusion in which he was destined not to be disappointed.

Oliver continued with his father on subsequent cruises of the General Green. He displayed lively interest in the unique calling and was diligent in mastering the problems that continually present themselves to him who would follow the sea in other than a subordinate position. An incident is related of this period which will serve to show that those qualities in the younger Perry, which were later to win universal admiration, were a transmitted inheritance. The General Green was convoying a brig from New Orleans to Havana, when she fell in with a British "74." The latter fired across the bows of the brig to bring her to. Neither the rudely saluted brig nor the General Green deigned to notice the hint, but kept steadily on. The frigate dispatched a boat to board the American brig, whereupon the General Green returned the Englishman's compliment of a few moments previously which brought her alongside. The Englishman bore down and hailed the American with a request for an explanation of the shot. Captain Perry answered that the brig was under his protection and the shot had been fired simply to prevent her from being boarded.

The British captain sarcastically commented that it was surprising if a British "74" could not examine a merchant brig. "If she was a first-rate ship," responded Captain Perry, "she should not do it to the dishonor of my flag." The rejoinder resulted in a polite request on the part of the English captain for permission to examine the brig. Captain Perry, knowing that no portion of the cargo was liable to seizure, now readily assented.

In 1800 the General Green, cruising about the West India station, visited the port of Jacmel, which was being invested by a land detachment of the famous Toussaint's forces. As the reduction of the place was considered of great importance to the commerce of this nation, the General Green assisted, after intercepting supplies consigned to the beleagured garrison. Between Toussaint's forces and the American ship, the garrison was starved out, and the entire number, more than five thousand, surrendered to Toussaint. The General Green was in close quarters during the engagement, battling with three of the forts and compelling the enemy to abandon two of them, and afterward to evacuate the town. The

strongest of the three forts was occupied for a time, but soon after capitulated. The American frigate suffered but slightly in the argument. This incident is chiefly of value here because young Oliver was an interested participant and it was his first taste of war. We may be sure that paternal example went a long way at this time with the future hero of Erie.

In 1801 occurred the reduction of the navy, at which time Oliver was still aboard the General Green. The Tripolitan corsairs were working their own sweet will with American commerce in the Mediterranean, the respect shown our flag by aliens of the present day being then sadly wanting. This was not strange, as we were then rather new and raw, though it was just about that time that we were destined to begin to ripen; a fact which was to be borne in upon the saddened marauders. Three frigates and a sloop of war were ordered to the Mediterranean for the protection of the pestered merchantmen. Young Perry was attached to the frigate Adams, one of the trio commanded by Captain Campbell. The small squadron adequately fulfilled the purpose for which it was dispatched. It

rendered protection to a number of American merchantmen, drove the barbarian craft to its ports, to the amazement of Europe, whose powers had previously bowed helpless before the piratical flotillas, and established an effectual blockade of Tripoli. Perry returned to this country in 1803, an Acting Lieutenant. In 1804, again under Captain Campbell, he sailed once more for the Mediterranean, Campbell commanding one of a quartet of frigates sent to reinforce the American squadron. Perry remained with the squadron till peace was concluded with vanquished Tripoli. He returned as Second Lieutenant of the frigate Essex, commanded by Commodore Rogers, his experiences having the more equipped him for the unguessed history which was to follow.

Because of the brilliant brood of naval fledglings, including Perry, who began notable careers in that unique strife on the Mediterranean, a brief sketch of the argument seems at this point permissible. Many a youngster, who was afterward to become famous, learned his first lessons of actual warfare in that school, lessons which he later turned to good account.

The short experiment in the reduction of the navy was not destined to prove satisfactory. In March, 1801, at the close of President Adams' administration, Congress passed a law authorizing the President to place the navy upon a rigid peace footing by retaining only thirteen frigates, six of which were to be kept in active service. The General Green was one of those retained, as was also the famous Old Ironsides. The complement of officers and men was to be reduced in proportion. Twenty ships were dismantled and sold. Seven of the thirteen retained were laid up by President Jefferson, under the Act, and officers and men in excess, after placing the service on a peace footing, were discharged. Work on six ships, the building of which had been authorized by Congress in 1798, was suspended. "So little," says Lossing, "did the American people then seem to apprehend the value of a competent navy for the protection of their commerce everywhere, as well as the honor of the nation, that a majority of them applauded these measures, while many Federalists assailed them only for political effect. That strong arm of the Government, which had so protected commerce . . .

was thus paralyzed by an unwise economy in public expenditure."

Those in charge of the helm of any nation, who allow themselves to be lulled by that oft recurrent dream of universal peace, are soon forced to a disagreeable realization of the continued aloofness of the millenium. In lieu of the ships of the line which could have protected American commerce on the Mediterranean, the United States was forced to follow the examples of the European powers, by entering into arrangements with the Barbary powers to render immune her commerce from the depredations of pirates. These arrangements entailed the payment of agreed sums to the Bey of Tripoli, and tribute in cash, military and maritime stores to the Dey of Algiers and the Bey of Tunis. Naturally, the wholesale and amazing truckling of the powers to them, rendered the growing insolence of the freebooters unbearable. The national pride awoke, and, in the spring of 1801, the President determined to act vigorously, a resolution which was strengthened by the recollection of insolent treatment the year previous, of Commodore Bainbridge by the Dey of Algiers. In May, 1800, Bainbridge, of

the George Washington, 24, sailed to deliver the usual tribute, arriving at the Dey's capital in September. Having executed his mission, he was about to leave, when he felt constrained to politely refuse the command of the Dey to convey an Algerine ambassador to the Sultan's court at Constantinople. The Dey observed that the American people paid him tribute, by which they became his slaves, and he had a right to order them as he thought proper. This was a hard dose for an American to swallow, but Bainbridge was advised by the American consul there to yield to circumstances, as, if he tried to leave the harbor without doing so, the guns of a heavily armed fort would open on his ship, which would be confiscated and which outcome would probably bring instant war. So Bainbridge yielded to the humiliation, and to the further one, exacted by the Dey, of sailing out with the Algerine flag at the main and that of his own land at the fore. When he had gotten away from Algiers he reversed the flags and bore the Algerine ambassador to the Golden Horn. In a letter to the Secretary of the Navy he wrote, "I shall never again be sent to Algiers with tribute, unless I am

authorized to deliver it from the mouths of our cannon."

Bainbridge was received differently in Constantinople, the Turkish Government entertaining friendly feelings toward the new nation of which they now heard for the first time. When Bainbridge returned to Algiers in January he bore a firman, tendered him by the Turkish admiral, to protect him from further insolence on the part of the Dey, who greeted him with another order for a mission to Constantinople. Upon Bainbridge's refusal, the Dey waxed abusive, but the display of the firman effected an instantaneous change of position, the Dey becoming servile. The result was that the Dey now obeyed an order of Bainbridge's. When the latter left he carried the French consul and about fifty of his countrymen, just released from durance, in which they had been held by the Dey's order.

The United States Government had been paying tribute to the Bey or Bashaw of Tripoli. That worthy learned that his piratical neighbors had been paid more than he. So, in the fall of 1800, he promised war if a demand for greater extortion was not met within six

months. The following May he ordered the flagstaff of the American Consulate to be cut down and proclaimed war. The United States Government anticipated this, and dispatched a squadron of four vessels from Hampton Roads, in command of Commodore Richard Dale, on board his flagship, the President, 44. The squadron reached Gibraltar July 1. Dale proceeded east, in company with the Enterprise, astonishing the powers that were in Tripoli and Tunis with a sudden appearance off their ports. The news of an engagement en route between the Enterprise and the Tripoli, a corsair, the latter being reduced to a wreck and captured, added to the native consternation. The squadron remained till autumn, and meanwhile the depredations upon American commerce languished.

In 1802 a relief squadron of six vessels was sent to the Mediterranean, one after another, from February till September, under Commodore Richard V. Morris, aboard the flagship Chesapeake. The Constellation, one of the squadron, arrived to find the port of Tripoli blockaded by the Boston, commanded by Captain M'Neill, who had been cruising independently.

M'Neill soon left, and, in a subsequent fracas, the Constellation's heavy guns inflicted much damage upon a flotilla of seventeen Tripolitan gunboats. The Chesapeake reached Gibraltar May 25, finding the Essex blockading a couple of Tripolitan cruisers. The Adams came in July, and, with the Chesapeake and Enterprise, protected American commerce. The squadron rendezvoused at Malta in January, 1803, and restrained the piratical corsairs during the spring by demonstrations of force before the various ports of the Barbary powers. The John Adams damaged opposing gunboats and land batteries of Tripoli considerably in an action in May, suffering only a small loss in killed and wounded. An attempt to negotiate for peace the next day failed, and in June Algerine and Tunisian corsairs became active, inducing a raising of the blockade by the Americans. Commodore Morris returned home in November, 1803. There was dissatisfaction. A court of inquiry decided that he had not "discovered due diligence and activity in annoying the enemy." So the President, says Lossing, "with a precipitation difficult to be defended, dismissed him from the service without trial. His

dismissal from the service has ever been considered a high-handed political measure. He died while attending the legislature at Albany in 1814."

Now was the begining of the end. The United States Government had found events to thoroughly dissipate the dream of universal peace. The national blood was up and the naval service, far from occupying a niche in the cabinet of cast-off national utilities, was now all-important. No efforts were being spared to effect an equipment which should bring the insolent freebooters to terms and force a wholesome respect for the flag. So it came that in May, 1803, Commodore Edward Preble, in pursuance of the awakened national spirit, was appointed to the command of a squadron headed by the Constitution, 44, with the Philadelphia, 38, Argus and Siren, 16 each, and Nautilus, Vixen and Enterprise, 12 each. Preble sailed in the Constitution in August, the others following as fast as they could be gotten in readiness. Captain Bainbridge had sailed on the Philadelphia in July, and captured, August 26, the Moorish frigate Meshboha, which had taken an American merchantman. The Philadelphia

returned to Gibraltar with the captured frigate, whose commander, it was discovered, was acting under the orders of the Moorish Governor of Tangiers in cruising for American vessels. Upon Preble's arrival he determined to look into the matter. Oct. 6, with Commodore Rodgers, he entered the Bay of Tangiers with the Constitution and three other ships. An interview was had with the Emperor of Morocco, who assured Preble that he desired to remain at peace with this nation and disavowed the act of the Governor of Tangiers. Rodgers sailed home and Preble made ready for a vigorous accounting with Tripoli. The Philadelphia, on Oct. 31, in chasing a Tripolitan ship into its harbor, had the misfortune to strike upon a wholly uncharted rock, where she stuck fast and could not be sheered off. The Tripolitans were quick to attack and capture her while she lay helpless, making Bainbridge and his officers and men prisoners. The officers the captors treated as prisoners of war, while the members of the crew were made slaves. The Tripolitans soon succeeded in getting the Philadelphia off the rock and brought her into their harbor.

The casualty was reported to Preble at Malta, through the efforts of Bainbridge. The Tripolitans were fitting up the Philadelphia for their own purposes, intending to use her in battle against her recent mates. Bainbridge suggested her destruction, if it could be effected. On Dec. 23 the Enterprise, Lieutenant Decatur, sailing with the flagship, captured a Tripolitan ketch, the Mastico. She did duty for the Americans thereafter, her name being changed to the Intrepid.

A plan by Decatur for capturing or destroying the Philadelphia was approved by Preble, and Feb. 3, 1804, he left Syracuse for that purpose. An incident celebrated in naval annals followed. Seventy-four gallant young fellows accompanied Decatur on the changeling Intrepid, which was convoyed by the brig Siren, Lieutenant Stewart. Storms deferred the attempt till the 16th, when, on a moonlit night, the Intrepid was sailed into the harbor and warped alongside the Philadelphia, in the guise of a distressed vessel whose decks were apparently well nigh deserted. The surprise was perfect. With Yankee cheers American seamen once more trod the decks of the Philadelphia, and

with an irresistible rush that brought terror to the hearts of the alien crew which held her, the latter were killed or driven into the sea. Corsairs were coming and the Americans set fire to the Philadelphia, which they could not preserve to their own cause, and regained the Intrepid, which, with the aid of oars, got out of the harbor in safety. Boats from the Siren were in waiting to aid in towing the ketch off. Both vessels sailed to Syracuse, the feat of Decatur and his mates producing great satisfaction to the squadron. Through this exploit Decatur later received a captaincy and others in the venture were also promoted.

Commodore Preble established an effective blockade of the port of Tripoli. In July, 1804, Preble's squadron sailed into the harbor. The Constitution anchored two miles and a half from the town, which was protected by heavy land batteries, a force of 25,000 troops, a number of gunboats and other craft, and a reef of dangerous rocks and shoals, in itself a formidable defense. Preble was not of the faint-hearted type, however, and Aug. 3, in the afternoon, his gunboats, the only craft that could draw near enough, opened a heavy can-

nonade on the town. Here Lieutenant Decatur again signally distinguished himself. This most dashing and picturesque figure of American naval history was in command of one of the gunboats, which he laid alongside a much larger Tripolitan craft, and led his boarders upon her decks. He captured her after a desperate struggle. Lossing tells of the only American officer killed in this engagement. It was James Decatur, First Lieutenant of the Nautilus and younger brother of Stephen. The Nautilus had caused the surrender of one of the enemy's largest vessels, and James was boarding her to take possession when her captain treacherously shot him. His pistol was loaded with two bullets connected with a wire, which struck Decatur's forehead, and bending, the two balls entered his temples, one on either side, killing him instantly.

Meanwhile the elder brother, after capturing the first corsair mentioned, boarded another, with whose commander he had a most deadly personal encounter. Decatur attacked the Tripolitan captain with a pike, which was seized by the latter, a powerful rascal, and turned upon the lieutenant. The American warded

off the blow with his cutlass, which snapped at the hilt. He then closed with the Tripolitan and the two fell, struggling, to the deck. An attempt by his enemy to draw a knife was frustrated by Decatur, who ended the argument with a swift shot from a pistol which he managed to draw from his pocket.

The conflict lasted two hours. Three of the enemy's boats were sunk, three captured, and the Tripolitans' loss in killed and wounded was very large. The Americans then withdrew, renewing the attack four days later, inflicting some damage. They again renewed the onslaught on the 24th of that month, the engagement being brief. On the 29th occurred an engagement of several hours, till the ammunition of the American gunboats was nearly exhausted. They withdrew under the thunderous protection of the big guns of the Constitution.

Till Sept. 2 a recess was taken, the fleet anchoring off Tripoli to repair damages. A general engagement occurred the following day. The night following this fifth bombardment the converted ketch Intrepid met her tragic end. She had been made into a floating mine with which it was hoped to blow up

the enemy's vessels in the harbor, and on the night referred to set out on her desperate undertaking. Aboard her were the gallant Captain Somers, Lieutenant Wadsworth, of the Constitution, and Joseph Israel, a young officer who got upon the Intrepid by stealth that night. The party was completed by a few men to work the ketch and two crews of boats employed in towing her. It was a dark night, the ketch entering the harbor at 9 o'clock. Soon after this there came a sinister red glare and a tremendous explosion. Those who went on that expedition never came back. Whether the dramatic finale occurred from a chance shot by the enemy, or an American produced it with an opportune brand to prevent imminent capture, is a matter that could of course never be determined.

A scarcity of ammunition and the advent of storms now closed active operations. Sept. 10 the coming of Commodore Barron relieved Preble, who arrived home late in February, 1805, with national honors and emoluments awaiting for himself and those under him. Commodore Barron was now in command of the largest naval force that had yet been main-

tained by the United States in those waters during the trouble. There were ten vessels, headed by the gallant old Constitution, now captained by Decatur, and including the Constellation, Captain Campbell, and the Essex, Captain J. Barron, upon which the stripling Perry was now serving, having won a lieutenancy by meritorious conduct during the war.

Barron made the President his flagship, and maintained the blockade of Tripoli during the autumn and winter of 1805. Meanwhile, Captain William Eaton, U. S. A., then consul at Tunis, conceived and managed a land movement against Tripoli. Hamet Caramalli, the rightful holder of the beyship of Tunis, had taken refuge with the Mamelukes in Egypt. Captain Eaton and other American officers visited him, and it was determined to make common cause against his brother, the usurper. Hamet Caramalli left the Mamelukes, and, with a few followers, joined Eaton, who had a force of representatives of many nations west of Alexandria. The allies, with a camel train, started for Tripoli in March, traversing the Desert of Barca and the wild regions of the African coast of

the Mediterranean for a thousand miles. With two American vessels they captured Derne, in Tripoli, in April. They were successful in other engagements, their following increased, and they approached the capital confident of success. "When," says Lossing, "to the mortification of Captain Eaton and the extinguishment of all hopes of Hamet, they were apprised that Tobias Lear, consul-general on that coast, had appeared before Tripoli in the Essex and made a treaty with the terrified Bashaw. This treaty was not creditable. Although it was stipulated that the United States should pay no more tribute to Tripoli, it was agreed that $60,000 should be paid for captives then in the possession of the Bashaw. Altogether better and less humiliating terms for the United States might have been obtained. All that Hamet gained was the release of his wife and children. He lost everything else. He afterward came to the United States and applied to Congress for remuneration for his services in favor of the Americans. His petition was denied, but $2,400 were voted for his temporary relief."

The four years' war with Tripoli was ended.

Tunis being still inclined toward insolence, Commodore Rodgers, succeeding to the command of the squadron in consequence of the failing health of Barron, anchored the flotilla on Aug. 1 before the Bey's capital. This sufficed. The Bey sent an ambassador to Washington.

This was the school in which so many gallant youngsters served, who were later to prove their mettle in the war of 1812, and afterward. As for the records of its scholars, they are written in the annals of the nation and the world.

CHAPTER III

AD INTERIM

AFTER the close of the Tripolitan War in 1805, there succeeded a period of seven years of harassed peace for this nation, before the outbreak of the struggle of 1812. It was a species of peace in which there was nothing of contentment or placidity, however. Even in those early years the youthful nation had come to rank importantly as a commercial power. This was a circumstance that just here rebounded unfavorably upon her, for it made her the sorely buffeted buffer between those warring giants of Europe, England and France. With the first, the motherland, the badgered offspring was destined to grapple again in desperate rebellion against tyranny. As for the second, had not the stupendous French dream of universal aggrandizement been broken by the might of resisting arms—arms upheld unweariedly by England through the stress of years—it is probable that the men of the West

would ultimately have been called to repel in blood the forces of the invading Corsican upon these shores.

The dream of universal peace has been so often blasted in an explosion so sudden as to stupefy the world, that the cynical smiles of men at its mere mention in these later years may readily be pardoned. It has been too often proved that its announcement usually serves as the prelude of some sinister convulsion. It is like the glory of a tropic day before the destructive eruption of a volcano. In the light of the past, one may clearly perceive the animus of the ironical smiles with which the nations received the Czar's proposal of general disarmament, and behold clear-limned, the spirit of covert menace in Kipling's famous poem on the Russian Bear.

Following the general pacification of Europe, early in 1802, when the claws of the Corsican were temporarily sheathed and he seemed disposed to remain at amity with the rest of the powers, there was an intense admiration for him throughout England. Then, as now, the squat, rotund figure loomed a veritable Colossus, grown a giant through the force of his prodig-

ious genius, which cast a shadow that was enveloping Europe, lengthening and deadly. For a time England was immune. Bonaparte was a hero; thousands of Englishmen found his rule a magnet that drew them to France. The same false sense of security that led America to reduce her navy lulled England for a time. But not for long. The shadow, for a time hesitant at the verge of France, stealthily crept out across the channel toward the indomitable island. Fair-seeming was irreconcilable with the threatening shadow. Suspicion was born, suspicion that quickly matured and begat hatred of the Corsican and his guarded schemings. The French Senate, indorsed by the people's votes, made Bonaparte consul for life. Islands and duchies were added to France's possessions. The Corsican was showing his hand. England insisted that the aggrandizement violated the Treaty of Amiens. Bonaparte threw off the mask, became belligerent, overbearing. He accused England of interference with his claimed scheme of promoting general peace; made extraordinary demands upon her, which included a request that she modify her constitution. It was charged that his agents were employed in

inciting rebellions in Ireland. So it went until the climax in March, 1803, when Napoleon asserted in an official note to the British ambassador in Paris, that "England, alone, cannot now encounter France." The commotion on the island that followed this intelligence was augmented a few days later, when it was learned in London that a Senatus Consultem had just placed 120,000 conscripts at Napoleon's service.

In May the British minister, after being insulted by Napoleon, was ordered to leave Paris. England immediately retaliated by ordering the French minister to leave London and declared war against France May 18, placing an immediate embargo upon all French ships in the island's ports. As a consequence many English visitors in France at the time were seized and imprisoned. The French concentrated troops, ready to invade England. England prepared at great expense to resist invasion, being aided by many exiled Bourbon Royalists who had found an asylum there. Their presence and efforts added to the Corsican's resentment against the British.

Writers have not been wanting who have

claimed that England's course at this time changed history, and that if Bonaparte had been left to himself the world would have been treated to the spectacle of a benevolent monarch, engrossed wholly in the affairs of his own country and in schemes for the betterment of his own people. But a mere glance at the career of the man would seem to render this theory untenable. Had philanthropy been his life's chief aim, his years could as well have been spent in Corsica. But it was Corsica, France, the world. It was with him a reaching out for increasing power from the beginning. His ambition was a fearsome, insatiable vulture that tore remorselessly at his quivering soul until the end.

Lossing compares the resultant war between these powers to a contest for the champion's belt, supremacy in the political affairs of the world; fought with science, desperation and brutality of accomplished pugilists; with an utter disregard for the rights of other nations. With that conflict we have nothing to do here, except as it affected the welfare of this struggling nation. The world well knows of it; of the Titanic fight of the Corsican; of the bull-

dog tenacity of England, which, flanked by the lesser of the dogs of war, finally won the day and left Napoleon undone.

The Louisiana Purchase was a most important step in the national career. In 1763 France had ceded to England the region east of the Mississippi, except Florida, and west of the river to Spain. The war for independence changed the first, the second involved the abdication by France of territorial holdings on this continent. But while the negotiations of the Treaty of Amiens were progressing, it was rumored that Spain had retroceded to France the region west of the great river. President Jefferson viewed this prospect with alarm. It seemed hardly desirable just then that France should re-acquire her foothold on this continent. The negotiations followed which solidified this country and removed what was a positive menace. There can be no doubt that colonial expansion had formed a considerable part of the fabric of Napoleon's dream. It was undoubtedly as well that at this time he was facing the imminent prospect of having his hands again full of Europe, and was bending his energies toward the invasion of England and

the destruction of her maritime advantages. It is related that he remarked at the time to Marbois: "This accession of territory strengthens forever the power of the United States, and I have just given England a maritime rival that will, sooner or later, humble her pride."

Under a modification of the British "rule of 1756" this country's commerce had prospered amazingly. The modification had been made for the supposed benefit of British interests. With reliance in the good faith of their brethren over the sea, American shipowners established a most profitable carrying trade. English merchants and naval officers complained that there were no more prizes to take. Britain's enemies used neutral merchant vessels and trade did not languish because of war. It was claimed that the "rule of 1756" was wholly evaded. The Courts of Admiralty began to hear, favorably, complaints to the effect that the neutral property allegation was a mere subterfuge, and early in the summer of 1805 the rule of 1756 was revived in full force, though secretly. So the seizure of American vessels with rich cargoes, by British cruisers, and subsequent condemnation by Courts of Admiralty, came as a

disagreeable surprise on this side. English writers, in defending this action, alleged that it was practically war against Great Britain to carry on a profitable trade with her enemies.

Much indignation ensued and the President was besieged with memorials from the merchants of all American ports, protesting and demanding redress. Another aggravating assumption on the part of England, which furnished the immediate cause of the subsequent war, was the British insistence upon the right to search neutral vessels for alleged British seamen. Through this practice many Americans were impressed into alien service. This is a feature of history so well known to all English-speaking people that it requires no elucidation. The practice, on the part of the British, had been made the subject of American protests since our beginning as a nation, protests that were of no avail. Requests made through the diplomatic branch that England should forego this convenient method of increasing her forces of able-bodied seamen only resulted in the somewhat remarkable suggestion, that to guard against these oft-recurring "accidents," American seamen should all carry certificates of

citizenship. The official correspondence of the time relates that British naval officers often impressed Swedes, Danes, and even Frenchmen, from American vessels upon the ironical pretense that they were English subjects. Attempts by this Government to have the vexed matter settled by arbitration were abortive, for Great Britain's position was that there was nothing to arbitrate. Impressments ceased at the time of the general pacification of Europe in 1801, for good, as the Americans hoped. The Peace of Amiens had respited British ships of war and there was for the time being a superfluity of men. But with the locking of horns of England and France in 1803, the impress was resumed with vigor. Every attempt of serious remonstrance by American public men failed to change the English policy a hair's breadth. Toward the close of 1805 the situation had become unbearable. Congress passed a resolution denunciatory of impressment and the depredations upon the national commerce. There was a subsequent resolution offered and finally passed demanding the restoration of unjustly confiscated property, indemnification for past losses and an arrangement calculated to do

away with the impressment of American seamen. Of the four modes of obtaining redress—negotiation, non-intercourse, embargo and war—it was determined to try the first once more. William Pinkney, of Maryland, was made Minister Extraordinary to England, to become associated with Monroe, the resident minister, in the concluding of a treaty to settle all disputes existing between the two nations. In the meantime, to bring the issue forcibly home to the parent country, the House of Representatives passed an act excluding many of Great Britain's important manufactures from importation here. The act passed the Senate and became a law in April, 1806. To accommodate the negotiations, this act was specified to become operative the following November.

There were hopes, during the debate on this measure, of better things from England, as intelligence had reached these shores of the death of William Pitt in January of that year, and the formation of a new cabinet early in February, with the Liberal, Charles James Fox, as the Secretary of Foreign Affairs. Mr. Pinkney sailed for England, believing there might be a change of policy, but the English absorp-

tion in the war against Napoleon made the complaints of this country a distinct side-issue. However, Lords Holland and Auckland were appointed and began negotiations with the American diplomats in August. According to instructions, the Americans insisted upon the abolishment of the impress. The English representatives, sustained by full authority of their Government, refused to yield the point, claiming that to do so would make American vessels asylums for British deserters. A quasi-agreement was finally reduced to writing, however, by which the English were assumed to agree to use the impress with more care and gradually to allow the practice to die out. Negotiations proceeded along other lines, a commercial treaty being agreed to which the Americans considered, on the whole, more favorable to their Government than the previous one. The matters affecting the carrying trade were also settled upon, when word of the Berlin Decree reached the commissioners. Holland and Auckland asked assurances that the United States would not allow their trade with Great Britain to be interfered with by France without resenting it. This the American commissioners had no

authority to do, so they refused. The Englishmen waived the point and signed the treaty, presenting a written protest against the Berlin Decree.

Because this treaty was loose in actual guarantees, and largely because it did not dispose of the hated impress, the President, seconded by Mr. Madison, the Secretary of State, refused to ratify it. Before the official refusal reached England there occurred the death of Fox. The Fox and Grenville ministry had disappeared, being succeeded by the warlike one in which Liverpool, Percival and Canning, compatriots of Pitt, figured.

In May, 1806, occurred the declaration by England of a blockade of the European coast from the Elbe, in Germany, to Brest, in France, in retaliation of the seizure of Hanover by the Prussians, at the instigation of Napoleon. On Nov. 21, of that year, there emanated from the "Imperial Camp at Berlin" Napoleon's famous decree declaring the British Isles in a state of blockade. He had scarcely a ship to enforce it, but relied for moral support on England's famous "law of nations," which made a mere paper blockade effective and allowed

might to prey on unfortunate neutrals. Napoleon's adherence for several years to this measure was the means of dragging in many of the European states against the buffeted England, whose unwearied resistance against all the amalgamated power of the Corsican and his allies cannot but win the admiration of the world.

The breadth of the Berlin Decree naturally filled America—which nation was about the only neutral extant at this time—with alarm. The commerce of this nation was then a rich morsel for the greedy. Still, the long-continued policy of France in the rightful usage of neutrals somewhat allayed the national fears, and American commerce for a time was immune. Doubtless Napoleon, perceiving the growth of hostility toward England in the United States, deferred any provocative measure for a time, in the hope that this nation might join him in a confederacy against England. But the United States did not declare war, and in 1807 there was rendered a decision of Regnier, the French Minister of Justice, to the effect that all merchandise derived from England and her colonies, by whomsoever owned, was liable to seizure even

on board neutral vessels. Americans being the only neutrals, the aim of the decision was obvious, and the new principle was swiftly put into practice. Then Great Britain prohibited all neutral trade with France or her allies, unless through Great Britain.

To paraphrase an old quotation, the United States now found herself in a deep sea between two devils. But more was to follow. Bonaparte, in retaliation, issued another decree, even more destructive to American commerce, and Spain and Holland immediately followed his lead with similar ones. This nation's commerce, that had flourished like a flower, became the rudely battered shuttlecock between smashing battledores.

The war spirit in the United States received a powerful impetus when in June, 1807, occurred the raking of the Chesapeake by the Leopard, off Hampton Roads, because of the former's refusal to .turn over three alleged British deserters, who, by the way, were found to be Americans who had previously been impressed into British service and had escaped to rejoin the Americans. Canning, the British Minister of Foreign Affairs, disavowed the outrage and

recalled the officers of the Leopard. The war spirit, in consequence of this affair, spread through the States like a flame, but the President and the cabinet preferred to allow England a chance to disavow the act and eventually to repair the wrong. Popular sentiment induced the Presidential proclamation July 2, ordering British armed vessels to leave American waters immediately. Should they remain, communication by Americans with their crews was forbidden. Wholesale preparations for defense were ordered to be made. The armed schooner Revenge was sent to England with instructions to the American ministers, Monroe and Pinkney, to demand reparation in the case of the Chesapeake and that all impressments should cease. The latter the English Government would not agree to, particularly as it was asked that their cherished right of search be relinquished. The Americans endeavored, through diplomacy, to bring about the results desired, but efforts proved fruitless, and from 1808 till the actual conflict, the shadow of coming war was never exorcised.

The Embargo Act, passed in December, 1807, was an attempt, by inhibiting the departure of

our vessels from our ports, to compel France and England to respect the rights of a badly injured neutral, an object which the measure did not accomplish. There was great opposition to the act at home, and it was constantly evaded. The sole benefit that accrued from the act was the encouragement of manufacturing enterprises, which received a genuine impetus in the States at this time.

The Embargo Act, being found deficient in the expected results, and hateful to the country's citizens in general, was revoked in March, 1809. It was followed by the non-intercourse law, the operations of which were later suspended in so far as they concerned France, by the proclamation of the President, pursuant to a provision of the law, but continuing in force against Great Britain, with whom relations grew constantly more strained.

Details are multitudinous regarding these stirring times. The limitations of space have forbidden the giving of more than a brief resume of the trend of events which led to this nation's second conflict with Great Britain. Suffice it to say that, no other course appearing possible, Congress declared war against the

United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, June 18, 1812.

Of this step the *New York Morning Post* of that old day said editorially:

"With a stone and a sling only, America commenced the War of Independence. Without arms, without clothing, without money and without credit, we took the field, relying upon stout hearts and the assistance of God for the success of a righteous cause. The event has proved that with such reliances a nation has nothing to fear. Our country has again thrown itself upon the protection of the Lord of Hosts; we need but prove faithful to Him and to ourselves. Victory will again crown our efforts and peace and plenty reward us for our toils. Who that is truly an American will despair of the success of his country; who will dare to believe that we can be otherwise than conquerors?"

And, for the purpose of glancing at the other side of the shield, the following paragraph, from the London Courier, is opportune:

"America knows not that the vigor of the British Empire increases with the necessity of exerting it; that our elasticity rises with the

pressure upon us; that difficulties only make us more firm and undaunted; that dangers only give us the additional means of overcoming them. It is in such a state of affairs, in such a great crisis, that a nation like Great Britain becomes greater. We are now the only bulwark of liberty in the world; placed, a little spot, a speck, almost, on the ocean, between the Old and the New World, we are contending with both; with one arm we are beating the armies of the Master of the Continent of Europe, and with the other we shall smite his Prefect on the Continent of America."

The scream of the eagle, the roar of the lion! Truly, a fearsome blending, these voices of the aerie and the lair.

CHAPTER IV

THE FRONTIER

IN the time of a troublous peace the nation had finally begun to prepare for war. It had been the Jeffersonian policy to maintain an economical course in regard to the army and navy; but dubious prospects of coming trouble, as the situation grew more strained, had changed this. The army had been increased, the depleted navy reinforced by ships that had been out of commission and by a few new ones, coast and harbor defenses strengthened, and before the beginning of the inevitable struggle the Government had appropriated several millions of dollars for purposes of war.

This country's neutrality, that neutrality which made her commerce the prey of aliens, had naturally caused the navy to languish during these few years. With the approach of the grim shadow of war, and the resultant activity in naval circles, a number of gallant eager hearts were gladdened, for days of

peace cannot but drag monotonously for the men, who, on land or sea, trained in a relentless school, await the call to arms.

Lieutenant Perry, at the close of the Tripolitan War, had continued in his congenial field, the navy. The stripling of Tripoli had become a man, strong and earnest, who followed hopefully the life that led to what he fully believed would prove Opportunity; a quest in which he was not to be disappointed. The deep, abiding desire for action, the wish that grew with the years, that was born of his innate genius, was destined, as was natural with such a soul, to be satisfied only in the embattled roar of Erie.

Perry's past services and growing abilities were noted, resulting in his appointment to the command of a flotilla of seventeen gunboats on the Newport station. This was soon after the adoption of the Embargo in 1808. He continued in this service until 1810, when he was given the command of the U. S. Schooner Revenge, then laying at New London, and attached to the squadron of Commodore Rodgers. During a cruise of the Revenge, in that year, Perry was the means of rendering

signal services to the ship Diana, of Wiscasset, Me., which craft was in distress off the coast of Georgia. As a result of his opportune assistance, he received a letter of acknowledgment from the owners of the vessel, with the added request that he forward it with his own report to the Naval Secretary.

During January, 1811, the Revenge, while returning from Newport to New London, under the command of Lieutenant Perry, was lost in a thick fog near the mouth of the Pawcatuck River, in Rhode Island. She struck upon a rocky reef off Watch Hill, and went to pieces in a few hours. The fog was of the consistency that seamen are wont to say can not readily be cut with a knife, and the peril of the situation was vastly increased by a heavy swell. The pilot was helpless to tell of the location of the wrecked Revenge. At this trying time Perry displayed the qualities that proved him, as truly as they did later upon Erie, a born master of men. His calm, philosophic acceptance of the harried situation prevented a panic, his potent personality and inspiring example swiftly brought order out of chaos, and discipline was soon again dominant. The re-

sult was that not only the men but most of the ship's property reached safety, the latter including the sails, rigging, most of the cannon, and nearly all the effects of value.

As the ship had been in his charge, Lieutenant Perry asked that a court of inquiry be appointed to examine into the circumstances of the casualty. This was done. The commission fully canvassed the matter and returned findings, that not only absolved the young commander from all blame, but pronounced his conduct during those trying hours to be most meritorious. He received commendation for evidenced judgment, activity and cool intrepidity; and the findings of the court raised in no small degree the already high estimation in which he was held by his Government.

The official report of the Secretary of the Navy, made but briefly before, shows the following to have constituted the United States Navy at the beginning of the war of 1812. The Constitution, frigate, 44 guns; President, 44, cost $220,910; United States, 44; Congress, 36; Essex, 32, cost $139,362; ships—John Adams, 20, cost, $113,500; Wasp, 16; Hornet, 12; brigs—Argus, 16; Nautilus, 16; Vixen, 14;

Enterprise, 14; Syren, 16; Viper, 10; Oneida, on Lake Ontario, 16. These were in actual service.

The following were laid up in ordinary: Chesapeake, 36 guns, original cost, $220,677; Constellation, 36, cost $314,212; New York, 36, original cost, $159,639; Adams, 32, cost, $76,622; Boston, 32, cost $119,570. Some of these, particularly the New York and Boston, were in such a decayed condition as to render it inadvisable to repair them. Besides the vessels enumerated, the nation had 165 gunboats, of which 65 were in commission, 93 in ordinary and 7 under repairs.

It is recorded that the first service in which Perry was employed after the war had begun was one that would naturally chafe a spirit like his, because the work lay in quiet waters. He was given the command of a flotilla of gunboats, stationed at Newport. He continued there for several months in the summer and autumn of 1812. This would not do for Perry. There was no prospect of action here. To the north, by the shores of the great chain of inland seas and the mighty St. Lawrence beyond, there stirred impending action. There was logi-

cally the theater, upon the bosom of the wide water; for across the deep lay Canada.

All things called for concentration of power at the north. Perry's prophetic soul willed his body where the fight seemed likely to be thickest. He invoked the powers at Washington. To the good fortune of themselves and the nation they—at odd times—well served, they finally consented. Perry was directed to join the naval forces on the lakes; and the order made history. The said naval forces were under the command of Commodore Isaac Chauncey, whose headquarters were at Sackets Harbor, N. Y., near the foot of Lake Ontario. To this port young Perry repaired early the next year, reporting to the man who was officially his superior, but who in achievement was not destined to equal even remotely the subaltern.

To properly understand all that entered into the border warfare during the War of 1812, it is advisable here to revert for a space and sketch, briefly, stirring events in the Northwest at a period immediately prior to the second war with England. In the year 1800 the Indiana territory, then including the present States of Indiana, Illinois and Wisconsin, was

established. William Henry Harrison, who was to achieve the Presidency, then not thirty years old, was appointed Governor. He had been a captain in the regular army, but had for a few years followed a civil career. A territorial legislature was organized in 1805, and Vincennes was made the capital. By the end of that year Harrison, by honorable treaties, had secured thousands of acres of Indian lands for the Government. He was powerless to prevent the encroachment of classes, however, who preyed upon and defrauded the Indians, besides undermining the unfortunate race with its worst foe, whisky. British influence was also felt from Canada, contributing to the discontent that spread, like a growing cloud, through the Northwest. Harrison did all that he could to avert the threatened trouble, but too many forces were working the other way. At the beginning of 1811 the Indians were impatient for the warpath, and it were idle to deny that they had had provocation.

Instances of Indian patriotism are by no means wanting in the annals of this land. In the breast of Tecumseh there burned as white a flame of love for the liberties of his people

as ever warmed that of a Caucasian brother. This picturesque figure was one of three sons born at the same time of a Creek mother (Methoataske), in a rude cabin near the Mad River, a few miles from Springfield, Ohio. The brothers were named Tecumseh (or Tecumtha), Elkswatawa, and Kamskaka. In the Shawnoese dialect the name of Tecumseh signifies "a flying tiger," or "a wildcat springing on its prey." With Tecumseh, Elkswatawa, "the loud voice," was, as the famous Prophet, destined to reach a commanding position among his people; which consummation he owed chiefly to the directing genius of his masterful brother. The third of the trio, Kamskaka, was unstirred by ambition and died in comfortable obscurity.

From historical accounts, the rise to power of Elkswatawa was the result of an impelling force not his own, for an authority states that up to the time in 1805 when he had a vision, assumed to prophesy, and took the name of Pemsquatawah, or "open door," he had been chiefly conspicuous for stupidity and intoxication. He possessed a sinister appearance, due largely to the loss of an eye. While lighting his pipe one day he fell to the ground as if

dead. He was prepared for burial, but in the nick of time he revived and related a tale of having been whisked into the realm of the aborigine's ultimate desire and charged with a solemn message to the braves to eschew evil and avoid the temptations of the white man. The cunning hand of Tecumseh was in this hoax; the brother was a tool, though an apt one. It was an opening move in a grand scheme that Tecumseh had formed for obtaining influence over the tribes of the Northwest, and forming the confederacy, which should resist the dominance of the Caucasian in the land of the red man. The Prophet continued his play upon the superstition of the redskins, and, though there were unbelievers in his own tribe, his sway over the great mass of the tribes in the Northwest grew almost incredible. He was accredited with miraculous powers, with being the true oracle of the Great Spirit. Onderdonk, in speaking of the tales told by his disciples, mentions his reputed power of making pumpkins as large as wigwams spring out of the ground and the growth of his corn being such that a single ear would feed a dozen men. His fame drew together a vast concourse of

Indians, which gave Tecumseh abundant opportunity to agitate the matter of the proposed confederacy. Governor Harrison was quick to perceive danger in this course, and made a speech to the head men of the Shawnoese tribe in which he denounced the Prophet as an imposter. He concluded the address with the sarcastic suggestion: "Let him go to the lakes. He can hear the British more distinctly."

The Shawnoese stood by the Governor. In the spring of 1808 the Prophet and his followers went to abide on the banks of the Wabash, near the mouth of the Tippecanoe River. Tecumseh was there when not engaged on political journeys among the tribes; but he was cautious. His brother was allowed to front the limelight while he kept in the wings. The Prophet visited Harrison in August at Vincennes, denying any complicity with the British. So ingratiating he proved that the Governor was inclined to believe he had misjudged him and dismissed him with friendly assurances. Subsequent signs pointed otherwise. Another conference was held at Vincennes in the summer of 1809, when the Prophet finally acknowledged that he had received invitations from the British in Canada

to engage in a war with the United States, though he stoutly maintained that he had scorned them. Harrison's confidence, however, was not to be restored.

Shortly after this, a treaty was concluded by which Harrison obtained millions of acres of the Wabash watershed from the Delaware and other Indian tribes. Tecumseh, though the lands had been those of tribes other than his own, bitterly denounced the cession and threatened to kill every chief concerned in it. He grew bolder, for he was confident of the success of the confederacy. He had already announced the doctrine, opposed to State or tribal rights, that the domain of all the Indians belonged to all in common, and that no part of the territory could be sold or alienated without the consent of all.

In the spring of 1810 the Indians at the town of the Prophet showed growing hostility. The situation grew more strained, till, in July, Harrison sent Joseph Barron, a French interpreter, to ask the brothers to meet him in friendly council at Vincennes. Barron met the Prophet, who raged and threatened him with death. At this juncture there appeared Tecumseh. He

immediately assured Barron that he was safe, and promised to visit Vincennes shortly. On the morning of August 12 Tecumseh appeared at Vincennes with 400 fully armed warriors, in place of the thirteen which he had been requested to bring, and encamped his following in a grove near the town. With thirty warriors he advanced to the conference, which he demanded should be held in the open air. He refused a seat by the side of Harrison; the offer, as interpreted, being, "Your father requests you to take a seat by his side." The chief drew his mantle about him, and, straightening himself, replied, "My father! The sun is my father and the earth my mother; on her bosom I will repose!" and seated himself upon the ground.

Tecumseh's speeches were eloquent, justifying his rare fame as a native orator. He enunciated the principle of unity that was to animate the confederacy, and demanded the return of the recently ceded lands. General Harrison's reply, reduced to concise brevity, was to the effect that the land had not belonged to the Shawnoese and that it was none of their business. This aroused the anger of Tecumseh,

who poured out a flood of fiery eloquence denunciatory of the Government, because of the wrongs which those of his blood were suffering. His warriors made hostile demonstrations, though no bloodshed occurred, Harrison being cool-headed and preventing his guards from firing on the Indians. This ended the conference for the day, an occasion which has been famed in song and story through its intensely dramatic features.

On the following day, Tecumseh, disclaiming any intention of an attack upon the Governor and his friends the preceding day, asked for a renewal of the conference, to which Harrison assented. Tecumseh reiterated his position, and the chiefs of five of the tribes present agreed to stand by him. Harrison was anxious to adjust matters if possible, and the next day had another friendly talk with Tecumseh. The conference ended with the Governor's promise to lay the matter of the demand for the return of the land before the President, though he assured the Indian that his claims would not be allowed.

War seemed imminent, and Harrison began to take measures to meet it. Tecumseh kept

actively at work perfecting his confederacy. Predatory bands of Indians began operations. A vigorous letter from Harrison brought Tecumseh to Vincennes July 27, 1811, with 300 Indians, He found 750 militia, well armed, drawn up for review before the Governor. Tecumseh spoke, claiming peaceable intentions, but insisting on the return of the lands. He departed for the south to try to induce other tribes to join his league. The Indians who had accompanied him to Vincennes returned to their town, dismayed by the demonstration of the military strength at the command of the Governor.

The Government's suggestion, that it might be politic for Harrison to seize Tecumseh and the Prophet and hold them as hostages, resulted in a proposal by the Governor that the territory's military strength be augmented and that a military post be established high up on the Wabash near the Prophet's town. This wise plan was assented to and steps were taken to put it into operation. A call by Harrison for volunteers was satisfactorily met by men like General Samuel Wells and Colonel Owens, the old Indian fighters in Kentucky. With 900 men, including some regulars, Harrison left

Vincennes and on October 3 began the erection of a strong stockade about two miles above where Terre Haute now stands. The fort was completed the 28th of that month, occupying a commanding position and being christened Fort Harrison. In the meantime messengers had been sent to the Prophet's town with orders from Harrison, in the name of the Government, to cease some annoying depredations and disperse. The messengers never returned.

The fort was garrisoned by a small detachment under Lieutenant Colonel Miller—the "I'll try, sir!" hero of Niagara, three years afterward. The main body of the army received some reinforcements of Kentucky volunteers. Harrison was commander-in-chief, Col. John P. Boyd being his next in command. Boyd's 250 regulars, with the volunteers and militia, comprised the force. The army, after building a blockhouse, encamped on November 3, within eleven miles of the Prophet's town. The troops were now surrounded by unseen foes, but Harrison's caution, evidenced in the admirable disposition of his force, rendered an ambuscade impossible. Finally, when about a mile and a half from the town, the

savages asked for a parley, which was had. The amenities were observed, and Harrison's request for the designation of a place of encampment was met with the indicating of a spot on the banks of a creek northwest a mile from the Indian town. Promises were exchanged that there should be no hostilities till an interview should be had the next day. This camping place proved desirable from two differing standpoints. It was comfortable for the purpose of the Americans, but it also was convenient for a night attack by the Indians. Harrison, knowing his foes, arranged his camp and his troops with care on the afternoon of November 6. The men were disposed to the best advantage to resist any meditated treachery. The camp was thoroughly provided with sentinels, and at the usual hour, except for the guards, was soundly sleeping.

In the absence of his brother Tecumseh, the Prophet was about to execute what he thought would be a grand coup, one that would make him glorious. Unlike his brother, he was the reverse of an honorable savage, a truce being nothing to him. This night was to witness the extermination of Harrison's force. With mum-

meries and mystic incantations, with charms that were to render his excited followers more invulnerable than Achilles, since the treatment included their coppery heels, he worked his 700 fanatics into a state of frenzy. Harrison rose at four the next morning and was dressing when the shot of a sentinel rang out, followed by savage yells that electrified the camp. The redskins had been creeping up stealthily to surprise their white opponents, first tomahawking the sentinels, but the quick eye of a sentry had rendered the amiable intention sufficiently abortive to demonstrate to the first savages who penetrated through the lines that the desired quarry was ready for them. To some of these, who lingered a little ere death claimed them, there must have been borne in something of a revelation regarding the inefficiency of a recipe for invulnerability administered by a certain dismayed Prophet.

The high executive ability possessed by this futile red pretender, this treacherous tool of an absent and greater brother, may be gathered from the fact that he had sent his dupes forth on their murderous mission unled, divided,

rushing forth like maddened beasts to slay, their sinister souls hot with the lust for blood which his dramatic mummeries had fanned to a raging flame. His own blundering hand severed the thong that bound the withes of unity, inviting annihilation in the falling of scattered reeds. The yelping fanatics, driven, through the crafty play upon their superstition and primitive passions into the very jaws of destruction, met a force the greater part of which had never engaged in a battle. But the ranks had been disposed by master brains, and they spelt cohesion. The triumph of concerted defense was there; to compensate for the presence of inexperience, there was the added inspiration of leadership by veterans. It was enough. With the dawn, while the false Prophet, upon a hill far to the eastward and well out of personal danger, still busied himself with his abortive incantations, the last of the redskins were put to flight, and the forest swallowed them. The following day Harrison and his forces entered the Prophet's town and found it deserted. It was soon in ashes, and the victors returned to Vincennes.

What of the result? Tecumseh, who had

been among the southern Indians, soon returned to find his hopes of the welding of the confederacy, his scheme to obtain concessions from the Government, frustrated by the folly of his departed brother. His dreams, which were after all inspired by a spirit of true patriotism for his people, were now dissolved. The die was cast, and he now became one of the firmest of British allies. As for the Prophet—who had claimed that the fiasco at Tippecanoe was caused by the inadvertent touching of some of the sacred vessels by his wife—he started on a recruiting tour among the Upper Lakes and Mississippi tribes and met with much success, being aided by some cunning arrangements of miracles which he luckily timed to occur in connection with earthquakes and sun eclipses, for which phenomena he modestly claimed the credit. But when most successful, he was exposed by two rival chiefs of his own tribe, who had followed him. These benefactors of their kind fully demonstrated to his latest dupes that the worker of mysteries was what is known in these later days as a fakir.

To return to the consideration of the frontier in the War of 1812, it may be well, since they

served so prominently as theaters of action, both decisive and abortive, to describe briefly Lakes Erie and Ontario, for the dominion of whose wide waters the two nations were to wrestle. Erie extends from southwest to northeast 231 miles. Its greatest breadth is sixty-three and one-half miles, and its circumference is 658 miles. Near the Detroit River there are many picturesque islands. The greatest depth of water is between forty and forty-five fathoms. Gales of wind are frequent, creating a heavy swell. The bottom is generally rocky, affording a precarious anchorage. From the northeast end of Lake Erie the communication to Lake Ontario is by the Niagara River, thirty-six miles long and varying from a half mile to a league in breadth, its course nearly north. This stream is famous for its falls, rapids and whirlpool. The velocity of the current subsides and the river grows more tranquil as it nears Lake Ontario, flowing into the western end. Ontario is 171 miles long, has a circumference of 467 miles, and its greatest breadth is fifty-nine and one-half miles. The depth of water varies very much, but is seldom less than three or more

than fifty fathoms, except in the middle, where attempts have been made with 300 fathoms without striking soundings. The position of the lake is nearly east and west. The shores exhibit great diversity; toward the northeast they are low and marshy; to the north and northwest they are lofty, subsiding very moderately on the south. They are often picturesque, the cliffs of Toronto and the Devil's Nose, over Presque Isle, being notable in the scenic line. Many rivers flow into the lake, and there are a number of harbors, particularly to the south, though it takes plenty of Governmental appropriations to keep most of these open for purposes of navigation, being obstructed with recurrent sand bars. Heavy squalls of wind are frequent on this lake, and tales of wreckage and death are by no means infrequent.

At the commencement of the war, the United States' principal lake port was Sackets Harbor (formerly spelled Sackett's), and this young hamlet, possessing a mere huddle of houses, was made the official headquarters for the armies of the north, and for the naval operations on the lakes. It is strange to reflect that Ontario, designed to serve as the principal

arena of conflict, figured so obscurely when finis was written to the tale, her pale scroll of three indeterminate years drowned in the glory of that single deed on the waters of Erie by Chauncey's young subaltern.

A man, when gazing out across a field of wide waters, may readily feel a sense of puny insignificance by contrast with the far-flung, pulsing power. But let him be consoled. Men are more potent than many waters; the destinies of the first may control those of the second. The name of Erie is linked, while tales are told, with the names of two men who dared. The name of Ontario endures alone—while those of two other men, who dared not, are forgotten.

Sackets Harbor offered exceptional advantages as a strategic point. It was opposite from Kingston, the principal naval station of the British, and was well calculated to resist attack, being protected by a long, high rock bluff on the lake side, with an excellent harbor in the rear. A long point of land, which afforded excellent opportunity for ship building, flanked the outer edge of the harbor. The virgin forest encroached upon the village, afford-

ing the materials for the crafts of war. From this point military and naval operations could be prosecuted up the lakes and down the St. Lawrence. Oswego stood next in importance to Sackets Harbor among the Americans' few Ontario lake ports at this time, while Ogdensburg was the chief American river town. As for the English, their chief ports on Ontario were Little York, the capital of Upper Canada (now Toronto), and Kingston. They remain the chief ports to-day, while on the American side, Sackets Harbor, somnolent and senile, quaintly picturesque, languishes in the cerements of fading memories.

The port of Kingston was as advantageous to British ends as was Sackets Harbor to the Americans. It is located at the point where the waters of the lower lake become merged with those of the Canadian channel of the St. Lawrence River. Kingston was the most populous town in the Upper Province and formed the principal headquarters for the lakes, as Sackets Harbor did for the opponents of the British to the south. At the beginning of the war the British had four armed vessels on Lake Ontario—the Royal George, 22; Earl of

Moira, 16; Prince Regent, 14, and Duke of Gloucester, 8. There were also several smaller vessels nearly ready for service. As for land forces, the British had in Canada at the commencement of the struggle about 7,500 regulars and 40,000 in militia. The population of all the North American British colonies was estimated at 400,000. Both the northern and southern frontiers of the lakes were very sparsely settled, though on the Upper St. Lawrence the British had more numerous and more populous towns than had the State of New York at that time. Most ports, on either side, however, were quite adequately defended.

The first battle of the War of 1812 occurred on a Sabbath morning in July, off Sackets Harbor, when a squadron of five vessels under Commodore Earle came to the port to take the Lord Nelson, a British vessel that had been captured, and the Oneida, the latter the nucleus of the American fleet on that lake. They were repulsed by the land batteries and withdrew with somewhat damaged ships.

The American "fleet" on Ontario at the opening of the struggle consisted of one vessel, the Oneida. In order to further their chances of

securing the command of the lake, it was necessary to convert merchant schooners into gunboats. Six of these were at Ogdensburg when war was declared. Two British warships were sent from Kingston to Prescott, opposite Ogdensburg, to pen in these schooners and seize them if possible for British purposes. To rescue them, there sailed from Sackets Harbor, July 30, the Julia, an armed schooner, with a convoy of riflemen in a Durham boat. This was in accordance with the plan of that resourceful militia commander, General Jacob Brown, whose gallantry later won him a commission as Brigadier-General in the regular army, of which, years later, he was to be invested with the supreme command. The Julia met the two British vessels off Morristown, eleven miles above Ogdensburg, and a sharp engagement of three hours resulted. The Julia's guns disabled her antagonists so that they retired, she herself being practically unharmed. The Julia then dropped down the river, took the six schooners under her protection, and brought them to the lake.

The first regular troops appeared at Sackets Harbor in August. Recruiting was prosecuted

vigorously. The Government's head-scratchings in the matter of the selection of a commander-in-chief for the navies of the lakes resulted in the choice of Captain Isaac Chauncey, then in charge of the Brooklyn Navy Yard. He was commissioned August 31, entering upon his duties immediately on the receipt of his orders. The first week in September he sent forward forty ship carpenters, with Henry Eckford at their head. The latter, by the way, was admirably chosen for his mission. None surpassed him in speed and thoroughness in the gentle art of transforming a generous slice of forest into a finished vessel. There were many such, and had the ships but fulfilled the purpose for which they were built—but, to quote a much hackneyed phrase of Kipling's, that is another story.

Commander Woolsey was directed to purchase some merchant vessels for the service; and officers and seamen, with munitions, left New York for Sackets Harbor September 18. Chauncey arrived there October 6. A half-dozen schooners were purchased, converted and renamed. With the Oneida and Julia these constituted the fleet, mounting forty guns, and

manned by less than five hundred men, marines included. The British at this time had double the weight of metal in their navy, with a far greater force. Lake Erie, which was included in Chauncey's command, presented the obstacle of Niagara Falls, so its vessels had perforce to be built upon its shores or at Detroit, where the unfinished brig Adams, captured at Hull's surrender, was built. Lieutenant Jesse D. Elliott was sent by Chauncey to Erie with instructions to purchase vessels such as those secured by Commander Woolsey. As for the naval operations on Ontario that autumn, they were unimportant. Chauncey's squadron started out on a cruise to intercept the British squadron on their return to Kingston from Fort George, where they had conveyed troops and munitions, the fort being on the Niagara River. The squadron spied the Royal George, Earle's flagship, and chased him into Kingston Harbor, where a rather harmless engagement of the flagship and the land batteries occurred. The smaller ships made the attack, the Oneida acting as rear guard. The land batteries were more formidable than Chauncey had supposed, and a gale arose, so anchor was weighed and the

fleet stood lakeward. Soon after Chauncey essayed to seize the Earl of Moira, capturing instead a small schooner that the warship was convoying. He also saw the Royal George and two schooners, but they did not seem disposed to meet him. "In this short cruise," says Lossing, "Chauncey captured three merchant vessels, destroyed one armed schooner and disabled the British flagship and took several prisoners, with a loss on his part of only one man killed and four wounded. The loss of the British is not found on record."

This rather colorless beginning extended interminably until the end. It was perhaps fortunate for American prestige that Chauncey's antagonists were worthy of his rather dubious steel. The serial tale of naval exploits on Ontario during the war is divertingly remindful of a game of tag. Sackets Harbor and Kingston were the naval depots of their respective Governments upon the lakes. At these points occurred the concentration of force and effort. Yet in an hour the waters of Erie ran red with blood—while in three long years those of Ontario were scarcely tinged.

A blockade was maintained for a time of

Kingston Harbor by a part of Chauncey's fleet, while he sailed for the head of the lake with the rest of his vessels, searching for more British boats. Gales occurred, forcing him back, and navigation closed early in December. Meanwhile the Madison had been launched November 26, only forty-five days after her keel had been laid, attesting the energy, often displayed later, of Henry Eckford. Preparations were now pushed vigorously for the ensuing year.

The world well knows how abortive were the attempts made during the war to invade Canada from the Niagara frontier. The expeditions fitted out for that purpose were dispiriting failures. The chief source of satisfaction to Americans in a perusal of the record of those times, must lie in the reflection that the British, too, in their several attacks upon points on the southern frontier, were also generally repulsed. As for a general invasion of the southern Ontario frontier during the war, the British often threatened it, but contented themselves with infrequent, scattered attacks, reserving their strength, principally, to resist the omnipresent menace of formidable Canadian invasion. In

this they were most singularly supported by the loyal population of that Dominion, which is the most steadfast of all her dependencies to Great Britain's cause and flag. The men to the north of the waters, as strongly rooted in adherence to their King as were those to the south in allegiance to their Constitution, formed a bulwark of defense, apart from the additional safeguard of imported regulars, that could not but render plans of invasion practically hopeless at their very inception. A mistaken impression prevailed in Governmental circles at Washington in regard to this. It was believed that an invading army would be welcomed generally by Canadians, who were understood to be weary of British rule and anxious to transfer their allegiance. It was thought, therefore, that they would be ready to assist the United States in the elimination of English sovereignty on this continent. The fallacy of this idea was to be quickly demonstrated, at crushing cost. The spirit of Canadian fealty to England, so unmistakably expressed, as it is to-day in the prefatory remarks of a late edition of Charles Mair's "Tecumseh," was equally virile then. When the second war came, it

transpired as in '76, and Britain had in her dependency a tireless ally. In the light of the services rendered their mother country by Canadians in those two wars, it would seem to an American that British historians, generally, of those old days, hardly gave them the credit that was their due. Their assistance was taken, with deliciously characteristic English complacency, as a matter of course; and if British arms suffered a reverse it was usually explained by a reference to the fact that dependence had been placed on "unreliable colonials." It is refreshing, however, to note that through long years of unswerving devotion and sacrifice to British ends, the Canadians are at last winning something more of appreciation from Englishmen: an awakening spirit which found expression in the tight little island's recognition of the work of Canadian regiments in the Boer War.

All efforts of Americans, during this first campaign, were to be directed toward the invasion of Canada. All the regular troops, with volunteers and militia, were concentrated at the north, toward this end; with the exception of a few regulars left to help bodies

of militia garrison fortifications on the sea coast. The invasion was to be attempted from the Niagara frontier, and also from Detroit, a point then considered as far west. Governor William Hull, of Michigan, was in Washington during the spring of 1812, when the invasion was being discussed, and advised against it, on the ground that the British authorities were enlisting the savages of the Northwest as their allies. He urged the maintenance of an American fleet on Lake Erie. President Madison caused steps to be taken toward the building of a fleet, and prevailed upon Hull to accept the commission of a brigadier-general, and take command of a force of militia to be secured from Ohio. General Hull assumed formal command of the little army of volunteers near Dayton, May 25. The army began its march up the Miami June 1. They proceeded to Urbana, then a frontier town, where reinforcements joined them. There now lay between them and Detroit, their destination, an almost unbroken and formidable wildnerness. They proceeded slowly, being met by messengers from Detroit with alarming news of the unfriendliness of the Indians, caused largely by the efforts of

Tecumseh. They pushed on to Fort Findlay, where Hull received a message from the War Department, urging him to hasten to Detroit. This message was sent the day war was declared, but did not mention that momentous fact. Hull did not get word of this till July 2, when, near Frenchtown, a courier reached him with a second message from the department stating that war had been declared and directing him to proceed at once to his post, make such arrangements for the defense of the country as seemed to him necessary, and await further orders. Hull had sent a schooner ahead, with effects, to Detroit. The British had been apprised of the fact that war had been declared before he had learned it, and the schooner was captured by them when passing Malden. The prior knowledge by the British of the state of war has led to a great deal of conjecture. The second dispatch to Hull, containing news of the declaration of war, bore the same date as that received by him at Fort Findlay, in which nothing had been said of war. The first had been sent by special courier direct from Washington; the second mailed to Cleveland, to be intrusted there to whomever might be

secured to carry it through the wilderness to Hull. Thinking upon this strange state of affairs, Hull's fears were aroused that the British might have learned that war was declared, as was indeed the case, and would seize the schooner at Malden. He tried to have her recalled, but it was too late. It was claimed afterward, and the assumption has not lacked for supporters since, that Hull's tardy apprisement of the state of affairs was due to the machinations of Southern politicians, who did not wish to see Canada annexed, fearing that such a step, by increasing the domain of free labor, would snap the influence of the slave-holding States in national affairs. It has been also claimed that these representatives of Southern interests influenced President Madison to withhold aid from General Hull for this reason.

After a day at Frenchtown, Hull's army proceeded to Spring Wells, at the lower end of the Detroit settlement, opposite Sandwich, in Canada. The British were throwing up fortifications at a point not far from here, opposite Detroit. The force was anxious to invade Canada at once; but Hull refused to do so till he received authority from Washington. This

caused a deep feeling of resentment; but a letter arrived immediately afterward from the Secretary of War directing the General to begin operations at once, and take Fort Malden, if circumstances justified. He was also directed to assure the inhabitants of the province about to be invaded, of protection to their persons and property. Hull decided, therefore, to cross into Canada at once, to the great satisfaction of his force. He, by recourse to stealth, deceived the British by a feigned move to attack Malden, and got his army of something over two thousand men across the river upon Canadian soil, landing just above Windsor. Hull issued a proclamation, promising immunity for all peaceful citizens, setting forth the issues upon which the United States had taken up arms, and stating his nation's purpose of liberating Canada from English tyranny. He warned them, however, that no quarter would be shown men fighting by the side of Indians. The proclamation served to reassure many citizens, who kept on with their customary avocations. Several small expeditions by detachments of American troops followed, in which some British regulars, Canadian militia and parties of

Tecumseh's Indians were put to flight. Colonel Lewis Cass won deserved distinction in some of these sallies. Hull, however, stating that he was not yet prepared, deferred the anticipated attack on Malden. His course is best explained by the claim that has been made to the effect that he believed the works and garrison to be much stronger than they in reality were. So dubious, however, was Colonel St. George, who commanded the post, of his ability to hold it, that he had determined to risk a battle in the open field, though his force was inferior to Hull's, rather than trust to the flimsy fortifications. The continued deferring of the expected attack, however, gave an opportunity for strengthening of that post, which was thoroughly improved. The wasted days were irksome to Hull's force, which began to murmur against him. The General left the army July 21 for Detroit, where he remained four days. In his absence the command of the army devolved upon Colonel Duncan McArthur, who resolved to make an attempt on Malden. The night of the 24th Major Denny led an advance party to drive back some Indians that bade fair to hinder the approach.

The next day he had skirmishes with them, which resulted in his men's retreating in confusion. The whole party then returned to camp. Denny had lost six killed and two wounded. The uneasiness of the little army, that now thoroughly doubted the absent commander, was augmented by receipt of the news of the surrender of Mackinack to the British, the post's commander, through the remissness of the Secretary of War, not having been apprised of the fact that war had been declared. The chiefs of hostile Indian tribes, now in conference with the British at Mackinack, had runners at work preparing their braves to gather for an attack upon Detroit. Hull, whose deliberation had lost him whatever chance he may have had, now confronted a situation of increasing difficulty. Reinforcements and supplies, for which he had sent to the Governors of Ohio and Kentucky, had not yet arrived. The news arrived that Colonel Proctor had arrived at Malden with reinforcements. And, as a climax, Hull at last became aware of the growing spirit of resentment toward himself. During the first week of August, however, the news reached the Americans that reinforcements

of Ohio volunteers and provisions were at the crossing of the River Raisin, thirty-five miles away.

But the activity of Major-General Brock, the Lieutenant-Governor in charge of Upper Canada, whose vigorous policy was in marked contrast to the dilatory one of his chief, Sir George Prevost, the Governor-General at Quebec, was fast rendering the idea of a Canadian invasion a hopeless one. Through his persistent energy with the Assembly, and in the collection of men and munitions, British arms were fast rallying to the defense of the province.

The criticisms of Hull's men at the continued inaction caused him to call a council of field officers, when it was decided to move at once upon Malden. There was a stir of preparation, when, on the very heels of the first order, came a second and disheartening one. It was to recross the river to Detroit, in consequence of intelligence just received to the effect that a considerable force of British regulars, militia and Indians were coming, under Brock, to attack the Americans in the rear. Sullenly the army recrossed the river on the night of August 7th and the morning of the 8th, and camped

on the plain behind Fort Detroit. Hull's reasons for falling back to Detroit included his desire to retain a permanent communication between his army and its source of supplies in the Ohio settlements. He dispatched 600 men, under Lieutenant-Colonel James Miller, on the afternoon of the 8th, to open a communication with the Raisin and escort Brush's Ohio reinforcements and provisions, referred to previously, to Detroit. A former expedition, small in numbers, sent for the same purpose while the army was on the Canadian side, had failed, being turned back by Indians. This second expedition, when but twenty-two miles from the Raisin, was attacked by a force of British and redskins, the latter under Tecumseh. The Americans beat them off and put them to flight. Miller sent the news to Hull, asking for provisions, as he wished to push on to the Raisin. They were sent him in charge of McArthur. He was ill for several days, so that he could not proceed at once toward the Raisin, and sent to Hull for more provisions. His messenger met Colonel Cass below the River Aux Ecorces and told him of the delay. Cass, to save precious time, sent a short dispatch to Hull acquainting

him with Miller's illness and asking if he, Cass, might relieve him. Receiving no reply he returned to Detroit, meeting on his way an express bearing to Miller positive orders to return to headquarters. The order was complied with, while the bitterness of the troops increased. There was even talk among the subordinate officers of taking the command from Hull and giving it to one of their number to be selected, though they naturally hesitated to take so radical a step. They contented themselves with the preparation of a letter in which Governor Meigs, of Ohio, was urged to hurry forward reinforcements and supplies. In the meantime General Brock had joined Proctor at Malden with a few regulars and some hundreds of militia, secured with great trouble. Here Brock met Tecumseh, and held a conference with the Indians August 14, at which the chiefs promised to support him in an attempt upon Detroit. Brock's position was one of amnesty toward those Canadians who had previously been under Hull's protection. Meanwhile General Hull, whose entire conduct at this time displayed the pitiable anxiety and indecision under which he was laboring, sent an-

other relief expedition to Brush, to afford him safe escort to Detroit, but changed his mind and recalled them before they had gone far on the errand. The artful Brock had numbers of his militia dressed as regulars. He caused alarming and seemingly credible reports to reach Hull of the threatened descent of thousands of Indians upon Detroit from Mackinack. Dearborn had failed to make diversions in Hull's favor on the Niagara or at Kingston, as he had been directed to do. Communications from Ohio, the source of supplies, seemed not to be relied upon. Added to these fears the supreme one, that his little army was threatened with annihilation by the savages, and censure of Hull must inevitably be tinged with pity. It was a different Hull, after all, with wearied brain and silvered hairs, from the vigorous Revolutionary hero of the preceding century.

The British had taken possession of Sandwich, after the Americans' withdrawal to Detroit, and planted a battery that commanded the latter place. Hull, seeming not to desire to exasperate the enemy, refused permission to his artillerymen to open fire on them from

the fort. The British completed their hostile preparations without molestation, and, on the 15th, Brock sent by two officers with a flag with the message that his force authorized him to demand the unconditional surrender of Detroit, and with the intimation that though Brock was personally averse to a war of extermination, his Indians would be beyond his command the moment the contest should commence. The latter menace weighed mightily with Hull, as the fort held many helpless, frightened women and children and feeble old men from the surrounding country, but his pride and his patriotism—which, though his course may have been a mistaken one, he undoubtedly possessed—impelled him to resist. He deliberated for some time, finally returning to Brock his refusal to surrender, which decision his troops hailed with lively satisfaction. The enemy prepared for the assault, Hull refusing to allow a detachment of his men to attempt to spike their guns or to have a gun placed at Spring Wells, where the enemy seemed likely to attempt to land. He seemed powerlesss to plan coherently, impaled upon the horns of a dilemma which grew more frightful with the

passing hours. The enemy crossed the river in full force early in the morning of Sunday, the 16th, and landed sans a disputing volley. They breakfasted, and then moved slowly toward the American line, the States' forces being drawn up, judiciously distributed, to oppose them at the electrifying order that was momentarily expected. One came, but it was to the effect that the outer line should retire within the fort. It was obeyed, though almost mutinously. Now a ball from the battery on the Canadian shore cleared the fort wall, killing several officers and soldiers. General Hull then directed his son, Captain Hull, to display a white flag over the walls of the fort, which soon stopped the firing, and gave him a hastily written note, which he bore out of the fort with a flag of truce. He carried proposals for an immediate capitulation. In this Hull acted solely for himself; he stood alone. The incredulous amazement with which the troops comprehended the humiliating truth—the white flag ere a defending gun had been fired—was succeeded swiftly by curses and bitter tears. The terms of capitulation were soon agreed to, and the formal surrender of the fort and

garrison took place on the 16th. The bitterness felt at this outcome was augmented by the fact that powerful reinforcements and ample supplies were then on their way to the southward. Two thousand men became prisoners of war. Large quantities of arms, ammunition and stores, then much needed in Upper Canada, fell into British hands. The influence of the British over the Indians was cemented. The volunteers and militia who had been made prisoners, with some minor regular officers, were allowed to return home on parole. Those of Michigan were discharged at Detroit. The Ohio volunteers were taken in ships to Cleveland, from whence they made they way home. General Hull and the regulars were taken as prisoners of war to Montreal. General Brock issued a proclamation of amnesty to the people of Michigan, calling upon them to give up public property therein, made arrangements for the civil and military occupation of the territory, and leaving Colonel Proctor in command of a garrison at Detroit, hastened back to Little York. His brief, energic period of labor brought results that won for him the undying admiration of Canadians and a baronetcy at the

hands of the Prince Regent of Great Britain. Of the arrival of the American prisoners at Montreal, of the courtesies shown General Hull and his officers by Sir George Prevost, of the speedy release of the venerable General, who retired to his farm at Newton, Massachusetts, it is necessary to speak but briefly here. A court-martial was held in Philadelphia January 3, 1814, to try Hull on the general charges of cowardice and conduct unworthy of an officer. General Dearborn presided, an officer whose own record that year could claim nothing of effectiveness, and whose remissness in sending notification to Hull of the armistice entered into between himself and Prevost prevented the last chance of saving Detroit.* Hull was found guilty and sentenced to be shot and his name struck from the rolls of the army. The court, however, because of his age and Revolutionary record, recommended him to Executive mercy. President Madison pardoned him. He died about a dozen years later, on his farm, the object of almost universal reproach, yet serene through it all in the conscientious belief that, at the cost of his reputation, he had acted for the best and prevented

*Lossing's Field Book, p. 293.

a horrible massacre of all those in Detroit who were under his protection. On his death-bed he declared that he had never regretted the act. Right or wrong, it must be admitted that all the signs point to the conclusion that William Hull courted shame by performing what he believed to be his duty. In its bitter consequences, one realizes the pathos of his closing years. If he was lax, so also were others. General Dearborn, with his interminable delays and the effects of his indifferently communicated armistice with Prevost, as well as the slothfully inefficient War Department, must divide the responsibility with Hull. For not one, but many causes contributed to Detroit's fall.

Hull's surrender gave the British the undisputed command of Lake Erie, the American brig Adams, afterward called the Detroit, having fallen into their hands. On October 7 the British brigs Detroit and Caledonia, the former manned by fifty-six men and having thirty American prisoners on board, and the latter having a crew of a dozen men with ten prisoners aboard, came down the lake and anchored under the protection of the guns of Fort Erie. Lieutenant Elliott, who was then at Buffalo, engaged in his commission of fitting out vessels

from the public service, purchased to dispute British supremacy on Erie, observed the arrival of the brigs. He determined to get possession of them if possible.

The Lieutenant collected about one hundred men, half of them sailors, who had arrived that day after a 500-mile march, and stationed them, at four in the afternoon, in two boats, which, under Elliott's command, put off from the mouth of Buffalo Creek at one of the morning after. In two hours they were alongside the British brigs, which were at once boarded and captured. In ten minutes Elliott had his prisoners secured and the vessels under way. The wind was light, however, rendering it useless to try and ascend the rapid current into the lake. So they had to run down the river, passing the enemy's forts, and anchoring not far from some of their batteries. The Caledonia was moored as safely as possible under one of the American batteries at Black Rock, and the Detroit engaged the enemy as long as the ammunition held out. When this was nearly gone, Elliott attempted to drift down the river, out of range of the batteries, and to engage the flying artillery. The pilot left without

warning, however, and the Detroit ran ashore on Squaw Island. Boarding boats were gotten ready and the prisoners sent ashore. A boat with forty men, from the British side, swiftly arrived, and the enemy boarded the brig. The Americans fought savagely and drove the boarders back to their boat with a considerable loss. The Americans then removed most of the Detroit's stores and guns. Then, to prevent her becoming of use again to the British, they burned her, and returned to Buffalo, with something of a restoration of American prestige on the frontier to their credit—such a morsel as was needed at that particular time.

CHAPTER V

THE FRONTIER (CONTINUED)

IN pursuit of the national determination to insure American supremacy on Lake Ontario, work upon additions to the fleet was vigorously prosecuted at Sackets Harbor during the winter of 1812-13. That post, being the principal depot for naval and military stores, much alarm was occasioned there by the capture of Ogdensburg (which was slimly defended), by the British on February 22. An attack upon the Harbor was feared, but the enemy did not attempt it, and soon evacuated Ogdensburg, returning to the Canadian side. General Dearborn, who was still in command of the Northern army, prepared actively in the spring for another invasion of Canada. His troops were embarked at Sackets Harbor, on Chauncey's fleet, April 23, to the number of 1,700. After a short delay because of unfavorable weather, the fleet sailed for Little York, the capital of Upper Canada, reaching

there the 27th. The troops debarked in the face of a hot fire from the woods, where a force of British regulars was stationed, besides some Canadian militia and Indians, about eight hundred in all. Major Forsyth's riflemen led the way, and the gallant General Pike, impatient to engage with the foe, personally headed several hundred of the infantry to the shore. The enemy retreated toward the town, the Americans following, while a brisk bombardment was maintained from Chauncey's ships. Some British batteries were taken, the gunners fleeing as they delivered their final fire. The American militia behaved with great bravery throughout this engagement. When the final battery had been taken and the way lay clear to the town, a tremendous explosion occurred. A British powder magazine had been blown up, presumably by some of their forces. A large number of Americans, and some of their opponents, were killed and many more wounded. Among the latter was General Pike, whose hurts proved speedily fatal. He was conveyed to one of the ships, where he died in a few hours, happy in the thought of victory. He had a gallant military record, and was also eminent as an explorer of the then

little known wilds of his country. It was he who discovered the majestic western mountain peak which bears his name.

At two that afternoon the American flag was waving in Little York. The enemy had fired their naval stores and a partially finished ship upon the stocks. The militia were surrendered with the town, but General Sheaffe got away with his regulars. It being determined to evacuate the town, the prisoners were paroled and the American troops re-embarked; the fleet sailing for Fort Niagara early in May. In anticipation, however, that an attempt might be made from Kingston upon Sackets Harbor in retaliation for the successful sortie upon Little York, General Dearborn sent some of the small schooners to the Harbor with a few regulars and some picked companies of militia to assist in defending the port, which had been left slimly equipped. This proved a fortunate move, as the enemy's fleet appeared off Sackets Harbor, May 28. A little American schooner gave the alarm and expresses summoned the militia. General Jacob Brown, whose militia commission had expired shortly before, was summoned from his home in Brown-

ville and ably directed the preparations for defense. The next day the enemy, composed of regulars to the number of about twelve hundred landed on Horse Island in boats, and marched across a sand bar to the mainland. A calm had fallen and prevented the fleet from actively participating. A large portion of the American militia posted on the mainland near the end of the bar to repel the enemy, being raw and untrained, could not withstand the galling fire of the British and were routed, running frantically for safety. Others remained. These, with Captain McNitt's company and Colonel Backus's regulars, together with some militiamen, rallied personally by General Brown, turned the tide. The British had advanced nearly to the town, the regulars retiring slowly before them and maintaining a steady fire. The officers commanding the British column were soon all killed or wounded, when the enemy ran in their turn, and reaching Horse Island in disorder, entered their boats and returned to the fleet. The chief injury their visit did was to cause the destruction of large quantities of valuable stores received shortly before in transports from Little

York. Some of the panic-stricken militiamen had informed Lieutenant Chauncey, who was in charge, that the day was lost, and he burned the stores to prevent their falling into British hands. A formal demand in the King's name from Sir George Prevost and Sir James Lucas Yeo, both of whom accompanied this expedition in person, that Sackets be surrendered, was refused, and the fleet soon sailed away.

Historical accounts of this engagement have not been lacking, which are rather inclined to hide the sprinting abilities of our own men under a bushel, and to bestow the laurel for exhibited speed entirely upon British heads—or heels. This is scarcely fair, however, and, though the entire truth may be somewhat unpalatable, Americans may find comfort in the thought that if our own green, inexperienced warriors dashed away from hostile bullets on this occasion, British regulars scampered quite as fervently a little later. In this connection a letter from General Brown to Governor Tompkins, of New York, written the second day after the battle, may prove interesting.

When the British made their attack he was with the militia, and he says, "as I was atten-

tively watching their movements & the happy effects of our fire, to my utter astonishment my men rose from their cover, broke, & before I could realize the disgracefull scene, there was scarcely a man within several Rods of where I stood." He exonerates Lieutenant Chauncey from all blame for burning the storehouses on the supposition that the day was lost, dryly remarking that "he was deceived by the materials on whom he relied & nothing short of Divinity can guard against such occurrences." The General assures the Governor that he does not "bear hard upon the militia. I do them justice Sir . . . . The noble men both officers and Soldiers of the Regular Army & some few, precious few Citizen Soldiers, who nobly resisted the shock of the Foemen, the Foe of Basswood Cantonment, are the men who merrit the honor of this Victory, and Sir, they must have it!"

Commodore Chauncey had come to Sackets Harbor for more troops early in May, immediately returning to the head of the lake. General Dearborn held a council of officers to arrange for crossing to the British side to attack Fort George. The troops were landed early in the

morning of the 27th, under the protection of the fire from Chauncey's ships. The enemy gallantly disputed the landing, but the American troops were not to be denied and forced the British back. They deserted the fort, which the Americans occupied by noon. The batteries at Fort Erie kept up a fire during the succeeding night. That morning all the magazines from Chippewa to Point Albino were blown up, the enemy retreated, and Fort Erie was entered in the afternoon by the American troops.

In March of this year a most important step, as it proved, had been taken. Captain Perry had then been appointed Master Commandant, and, at about this time, he was designated to exercise the superintendency of the construction and outfitting of a fleet for use upon Lake Erie, and to have the command of the naval force upon that lake, under the general direction of Commodore Chauncey. He arrived at Erie from Sackets Harbor near the close of March. Receiving word that an attack was scheduled to occur on Fort George, he set out from Erie a few days before the attack took place. He volunteered his services and accompanied the fleet when the attack

was made. He rendered most valuable assistance in the debarkation of the troops, and was active throughout the engagement, being exposed to imminent personal danger during its entire duration. According to Commodore Chauncey's report he was "present at every point where he could be useful, under showers of musketry, but fortunately escaped unhurt."

On the day following the capture of Fort George, Perry, with fifty-five seamen, was dispatched to Black Rock by Commodore Chauncey to take charge of five vessels there, and to take them to the port of Erie. He was directed to prepare them for service on Lake Erie as speedily as possible. The genius of energetic action possessed by Henry Eckford had been signally shown in the preparation of this quintet of ships, he having gotten them ready after the attack on Little York. General Dearborn offered 200 soldiers to be put aboard of these ships at Black Rock, to assist in their protection during their passage to Erie. So the young commander proceeded with the vessels early in June to Erie, arriving there safely. The British had commissioned the Queen Charlotte and Lady Prevost to intercept the Ameri-

can ships, and they were cruising off Long Point for that purpose. But Perry was wary and contrived to have his ships pass them unperceived in the night. The Niagara and the Lawrence, which had been built at Erie under Perry's supervision, were launched in May. The Queen Charlotte and three others of the enemy's fleet descended the lake May 26, menacing the Americans, but after the affair at Fort George they withdrew, sailing up the lake. July 22, Commodore Chauncey's squadron arrived at the head of Lake Ontario, bringing 170 men for Perry's fleet. The decisive moment was arriving fast, and it was felt that the question whether British control should continue on Lake Erie would be decided that summer.

The disastrous results of Hull's capitulation had included complete British dominion upon Lake Erie and the exposure of the Northwestern frontier to the horrors of Indian warfare. This roused the feeling of the nation, particularly in the West. Early in August, 1812, a body of troops, destined for the relief of Hull, had gathered at Louisville and at points along the Ohio River. When Hull's capitulation became known, volunteers fairly poured from all parts

of Kentucky and Ohio to swell the ranks. Subsequent movements by Harrison, who had been placed in command of these troops, culminated in his approach toward Fort Wayne, which had been invested by Indian allies of the British. Fearing the Tippecanoe hero, they fled September 12, before he arrived. Harrison sent successful expeditions against the Indians, destroying a number of villages. Shortly afterward General Winchester arrived at Fort Wayne to reinforce Harrison, who was at once commissioned by the President as Commander-in-Chief of the Northwestern Army, with Winchester second in command. September 22, Winchester marched with 2,000 men for Fort Defiance, Harrison being at Fort Wayne. He soon followed, however, with an escort accompanying a detachment of pack horses with provisions, and personally took charge of the expedition. The British and Indians, who occupied Fort Reliance, retreated, the Americans taking possession. Harrison departed October 4, leaving troops there to form the left wing of his army, under Winchester, while he returned to Ohio to organize and bring on the rest of his forces to

constitute the center and right wing. Some minor movements, which included a victory for General Tupper against a force of British and allies, were followed early in January by the departure of Winchester with his force from Fort Defiance down the Miami River to the Rapids. Frenchtown, on the River Raisin, defenseless and exposed since Hull's surrender, was desirous of protection, for which the inhabitants now appealed to Winchester. A relief detachment was sent under Colonel Lewis. Three miles from Frenchtown a force of Indians was encountered which was repulsed after a brisk fight. The detachment was reinforced by men under the command of Winchester himself. Word of these events having reached General Proctor he at once advanced from Detroit with 1,500 British and Indians. The outnumbered Americans made a dogged fight; but Winchester was captured, and, to save his troops from the butcheries feared at the hands of the savages, capitulated January 22. The British carried the prisoners to Malden, excepting about fifty wounded men, who were left at Frenchtown. These were cruelly massacred by Indians. This shocking event was followed by

the killing of additional prisoners, and the murder of one of several surgeons and assistants sent by Harrison to Frenchtown under a flag of truce to attend the wounded. Harrison had been at Lower Sandusky. He started, with the small force under his command, to march to Winchester's relief, but learning that the latter's defeat was irretrievable, he reluctantly returned. Harrison's plan of campaign was now rendered abortive; but he set to work to build up his depleted army anew, in which he was assisted by Governor Shelby, of Kentucky, who ordered 1,200 of his militia to his relief. In February Harrison erected Fort Meigs, christened in honor of Ohio's Governor, at the Miami Rapids. The relieving Kentuckians arrived near this fort May 4, ascertaining that it was besieged by a large force of British and Indians under Proctor. The beleagured Harrison sent orders to General Green Clay, in command of the relief force, to follow plans that should disperse the enemy. The instructions were followed with a success that resulted in the taking of the enemy's batteries and the latter dispersing to the woods. The elated Americans followed them, instead of crossing the river

and returning to the fort, as they had been instructed. Proctor now judged it time to withdraw, and did so on May 9. He threatened a number of movements upon the forts of Lowe, Sandusky, Cleveland and Erie during the spring and summer, in which he was facilitated by British dominion over the lake, but actually attacked only that at Lower Sandusky, defended by Major Croghan and 160 men, the commander a youth of 21 years. Proctor had 500 regulars and about 800 Indians. The attack occurred early in August. He sent officers with a flag of truce to demand the surrender of the fort, but Croghan refused. A spirited engagement followed, in which the enemy were finally repulsed. An incident illustrative of man's humanity to man occurred during this attack. While the assault was in progress, the Americans threw full canteens of water down to wounded redcoats, who lay, writhing in agony and parched with thirst, in the ditch outside the works. The wounded, among the prisoners captured, were, by Harrison's direction, given the best of attention.

Matters now did not look so hopeless for the Americans. Could the lake be swept clear of

British supremacy, that feat would involve the redemption of the Northwest. For the accomplishment of this all-important step, two capable men, the intrepid Harrison and Perry, Chauncey's gallant young subaltern, were now working.

From the date of the receipt of his orders from Washington to join Chauncey at Sackets Harbor which instructions he received at Newport February 17 of that year, Perry's remarkable fund of energy had been ungrudgingly expended toward all the objects that fell to his hands. He had the unhesitating swiftness of action which is allied to the highest of executive ability. His order directed him to bring all of the best men in his Newport flotilla, and on the very day of its receipt he sent fifty of them away in sleds to the West. He sent other parties in quick succession, and finally, with a thirteen-year-old brother who was zealous for adventure, started himself upon the long drive to the distant Harbor, which he reached March 3. For a fortnight he had remained there chafing, awaiting an expected British attack that did not materialize, and then started for Erie, at that time known as Presque Isle. Erie had

been chosen by the Government as the base of operations on the lake because of its convenient location to other points, its comparative immunity from the possibility of successful attack by the enemy, and because supplies could be sent from Pittsburg via the Alleghany River and Lake Chautauqua. He found several vessels of war, partially finished, with defending detachments of a few raw volunteers and drilled shipyard hands; the force being without arms or ammunition. Perry sent men to Buffalo after them, while he personally hurried to Pittsburg to secure carpenters, forward stores and munitions, and to attend to the thousand-and-one details that confronted him. The forest stood near at hand, Perry infused everyone with his own dynamic vigor, and the result was that the gunboats were floated early in May and the brigs launched toward the close of the month. As it happened, however, Perry did not witness the launching of the brigs. Having learned of the projected attack on Fort George, he was rowed in a small boat to Buffalo, descending the river within musket shot of the enemy, and reached a village near Grand Island. Here his sailors captured an old pacing

horse grazing on the public common. They fashioned a bridle of rope and found a dilapidated saddle without stirrups. Given the sorry means to an honorable end, Perry complacently swung aboard, and clutching his charger's mane was ultimately racked into camp, where he performed the brilliant service previously recorded in the attack on Fort George. His successful bringing of the five vessels at Black Rock to Erie, which has been referred to, was followed by his effort, despite the discouragement of physical ailments and the difficulty of securing anything like proper equipment, to get his squadron in shape to effectually dispute with the British the supremacy of the lake.

The American squadron was completed July 10, but as yet it could be used for purposes of exhibition only. All told, Perry had but officers and men enough to man one brig. The squadron lay helpless enough in the harbor, while the ships of the enemy swaggered insolently outside. It was gall and wormwood to Perry, who dispatched vehement requests for assistance that it seemed would never be forwarded. To add to his troubles, he fell ill of bilious remittent fever, but while he suffered in

body his indomitable spirit still asserted itself, and he retained his strong grasp of affairs and continued his efforts to obtain equipment. In these desperate straits, without men to man his ships, sans everything required for effective service, the young commander received a continual pounding from the Government, calling upon him to co-operate with Harrison. Under the circumstances the orders spelled irony. The Government asked that Perry play Aladdin and furnish his own lamp. Washington was fully aware of the sore straits he was in, for he had besieged the powers for relief, and besieged in vain. As added climaxes, came messages from Harrison, justly fearful for the menacing fate of the little army, also the receipt of intelligence that the enemy's new powerful Detroit was nearly ready for service at Malden, and that Captain Robert H. Barclay, with veteran officers and men, had arrived to take charge of the naval forces of the British. The final item was most sinister, for Barclay, who had lost an arm in the service of his King, bore a justly high reputation, and had been at Trafalgar with the great Nelson. The impatience of Perry now found vent in urgent letters to

Chauncey.* On July 19 he wrote: "The enemy's fleet of six sail are now at the bar of this harbor. What a golden opportunity if we had men! . . . Should their object be to attack us, we are ready to meet them. I am constantly looking to the eastward; every mail and every traveler from that quarter is looked upon as the harbinger of the glad tidings of our men being on the way . . . Give me men, sir, and I will acquire both for you and myself honor and glory on this lake or perish in the attempt. Conceive my feelings; an enemy within striking distance, my vessels ready and not men enough to man them. Going out with those I now have is out of the question. You would not suffer it if you were here. Think of my situation: the enemy in sight . . . and yet obliged to bite my fingers with vexation for want of men." Sailing-Master Champlin soon arrived with only seventy men, which caused Perry to write Chauncey: "For God's sake and yours and mine, send me men and officers, and I will have them all (the British squadron) in a day or two. Commodore Barclay keeps just out of reach of our gunboats.

*Lossing, p. 513.

The vessels are all ready to meet the enemy the moment they are officered and manned. Our sails are bent, provisions on board, and in fact everything is ready. Barclay has been boarding me for several days; I long to be at him." And then, with characteristic generosity: "However anxious I am to reap the reward of the labor and anxiety I have had on this station, I shall rejoice, whoever commands, to see this force on the lake, and surely I had rather be commanded by my friend than by any other. Come then, and the business is decided in a few hours."

But it took longer. The inertia lingered. The Government was deaf to all pleadings; the recruits from Ontario were few and inferior for the most part, Chauncey retaining the picked men for his game of I-spy with Yeo upon Ontario. The despairing Perry gave his true reason to Harrison for the inability to co-operate with him, and was gravely rebuked by the Naval Secretary for "exposing his weakness," which, by the way, the Secretary did not intimate would be strengthened.

Such help as he received from Ontario, drew from him the complaint to Chauncey that he

had been sent "a motley set, blacks, soldiers and boys." The Commodore, through continual practice in the framing of lengthy reports of things left undone on Ontario, was becoming an adept in letter writing, and the reply he dispatched was sufficiently sarcastic to draw from the indignant Perry a request for a removal from the station because "he could not serve longer under an officer who had been so totally regardless of his feelings." Then followed, however, "a manly, generous letter from Chauncey which later restored the kindliness of feeling between them."

The enemy engaged in movements during July that seriously alarmed Erie. Word was received from General Porter, at Black Rock, that a British Military force was collecting at Long Point, opposite Erie. A British diversion occurred toward Fort Meigs, and Barclay's ships suddenly disappeared. A combined military and naval attack on Erie was anticipated and a panic resulted. Many citizens fled from the town. Under the directions of Perry a considerable defending military force was collected, but the enemy, which had found it difficult to mass as large a force as they desired, did not attack.

By the end of July Perry had in the neighborhood of 300 fit officers and men. He had to man two brigs of 20 guns each, and eight smaller craft. Mild weather prevailed and the ships of the enemy ceased temporarily to menace Erie. Perry, despairing of getting what he required, showed his heroic mettle by resolving to go out upon the lake with what he had. August 1, which fell on a Sunday, he moved his flotilla down to the entrance of the harbor, intending to cross early the next morning. But an unexpected difficulty had now to be met.

A sand bar lay across the entrance of the harbor. There had been a depth of six feet of water over it, but the wind had been at work and reduced it to four, such variations being common in this lake as well as in some parts of Ontario. The smaller vessels were lightened and managed to squeeze over the bar. They were then judiciously placed, with broadsides toward the open lake, to afford protection against a possible British attack, while the problem of getting the larger ships over the bar was wrestled with. The brigs Lawrence and Niagara drew nine feet of water;

the greatest depth over the bar was six feet. To obviate the difficulty, the assistance of "camels" was invoked. Two scows 50 feet long, 10 feet wide, and 8 feet deep, especially prepared for the purpose, were filled with water and floated, parallel on either side with the vessel to be helped. They were secured by large timbers extending from the port holes of the brig across the scows. The space between the timbers and boats was made secure with additional timbers, and the scows were then laboriously pumped out. Buoyancy and the lifting power developed succeeded in landing the brigs safely over the bar. While it takes but a moment to relate this exploit, it occupied four days of the most arduous work, days filled with exhausting labor and keen anxiety lest the British squadron appear while the brigs were on the bar. That they did not so appear was probably due to the fact that the citizens of Port Dover, a small village on Ryason's Creek, a little below Long Point, in Canada, had offered Commodore Barclay and his officers a public dinner, which invitation had been accepted. The dinner occurred while Perry was successfully getting his brigs over

the bar. It is related that Captain Barclay, in response to a toast, said on this occasion: "I expect to find the Yankee brigs hard and fast on the bar at Erie when I return, in which predicament it will be but a small job to destroy them." As it was, the absence of the British squadron at that time seemed providential for the national cause. Barclay's vessels, hastening to destroy the ships they supposed were grounded, came in sight the 5th, just in time to see the last American ship, the Niagara, sliding off the bar into deep water. The enemy abruptly bore away toward Long Point. Perry had put his flotilla in perfect order by night, when it weighed anchor and stood away toward Long Point on its first cruise. Perry searched for the opposing fleet for three days, but it had sailed for Malden to await the completion of the Detroit. The Americans also received some belated accessions. Captain Jesse D. Elliott arrived at Erie with 100 officers and desirable men, manning the Niagara, of which Elliott assumed command, Perry now resolved to sail up the lake and report himself in readiness to co-operate with Harrison. His confidence was increased by the fact that some of

the men Elliott brought were veterans of the Constitution.

Perry sailed from Erie August 12, fully prepared for mischief if any arose, and rendezvoused at Put-in Bay three days later. This is a picturesque stretch of water, affording safe anchorage for vessels from gales, the harbor hedged from the sweep of the open lake by a number of islands, large and small. The islands lie off Port Clinton, the capital of Ottawa County, Ohio. The bay is 34 miles from Malden. The enemy had not been seen, but in the evening of the following day a British schooner, scouting in the neighborhood, was chased by Sailing-Master Champlin, of the Scorpion. A thunderstorm came up and the scout escaped among the islands.

The next day the squadron sailed to the point of the peninsula off Sandusky Bay, and Perry had signal guns fired, per arrangement, to let Harrison, who was at Camp Seneca, know he was there. Perry, being informed that Harrison, with 8,000 regulars, militia and Indians was twenty-seven miles away, dispatched boats for the General and his staff. They arrived the night of the 19th, the company including chiefs

of adjacent tribes of Indians whose friendship Harrison had secured. Perry and Harrison talked over their campaign and inspected the bay the next day with a view toward concentrating the military force there for transportation to Malden. On the 21st Harrison returned to his camp to begin preparations for moving. Perry sent a small vessel to Erie for stores and sailed with the squadron toward Malden. He discovered the rival fleet to be inside the mouth of the Detroit River. As the new Detroit had not yet joined the enemy's squadron, Perry projected attacking Barclay there. Unfavoring winds arose, however, and Perry's malady returned with such force as to confine him to his bunk, while others of his men also fell ill. An attack was reluctantly deferred and the squadron returned to Put-in Bay, arriving there August 27. Here a reinforcement of thirty-six soldiers came from Harrison, to act as marines and supply vacancies caused by sickness. Perry was ill a full week, but recovered so that the squadron sailed September 1 for Malden. Barclay's fleet was there and Perry hoped for an engagement, but Barclay was sensibly awaiting the completion of the Detroit

and was not to be cajoled. As the British ships lay under the protection of the shore batteries, and manifested no disposition to move out into the open, Perry's squadron drew off and sailed for Sandusky Bay, for communication with Harrison. Then the fleet returned to Put-in Bay, where it anchored, to remain inactive until the great event of a few days later.

CHAPTER VI

THE BATTLE OF LAKE ERIE

GIBRALTAR ISLAND, aptly named, rugged and picturesque, buttressed with rock masses and sentineled by outposts of guarding trees, afforded an eminence that has become historic. A limestone pile some fifty feet in height faced the lake, the waters of which lapped the base of the natural arch that formed its front. As "Perry's Lookout" the pile is known to-day; for the young commander, awaiting the issue which was to make or mar his fortune, was wont to spend long hours upon its summit, glass at eye, anxiously sweeping the wide water that lay beyond the scattered hemming islands, for a glimpse of the hostile sails whose coming would spell action. He was prepared at any moment, for he had received word that Barclay, because of the scarcity of provisions for Proctor's army at Malden, was preparing to sail out and

open communication with Long Point, that chief depot of British supplies on the Detroit River.

The days passed without result, and a conference occurred between Perry and his officers on the evening preceding the battle, the commander having determined to attack Barclay at his anchorage if he should fail to sail out. Written instructions were given each officer of which vessel of the enemy to engage, and the young commander accentuated significantly the school in which he sought instruction with the remark: "Gentlemen, remember your instructions. Nelson has expressed my idea in the words, 'If you lay your enemy close alongside, you cannot be out of your place.' Good night." Which parting words, coupled with the fact that Barclay was made of the same gallant stuff as his opponent, indicate clearly enough the reason for the wide divergence between the naval records of Erie and Ontario during that war.

It was during this conference, too, that Perry exhibited to his officers that battle-flag whose fame will endure with time; the banner which, at the Commodore's request, Samuel Hambleton, the purser, had caused to be privately

prepared at Erie. It was square in shape and there appeared in great white letters upon a field of blue the words of the dying Lawrence, a thrilling heritage, "Don't Give Up the Ship!" This flag, hoisted to the main-royal mast-head of the flagship that was christened for the hero, whose stiffening lips had framed those final, immortal words, was to serve as the signal for the fleet to engage the enemy.

And though the brave blue banner was destined to come drooping down to the bloody deck of a shivering hulk, that staggered helpless in a stifling smother of murderous broadsides; broadsides that had made of the poor, doomed bark a shambles, a weltering hell of blood and agony and death, there was to follow a thing that must ever thrill the blood of the American. The desertion of the derelict, the dash of a rowboat across a shot-rent sea (an indomitable figure erect in the stern, the shoulders draped in a white-lettered banner with a field of blue), the trampling of resolute feet upon a sound, as yet uncrimsoned deck, the white letters again appealing from a lofty mast-head, the magnificent response the final terrific, irresistible, crunching dash that wrenched

the most signal victory fairly out of the gasping jaws of bitterest defeat. Truly, the blue flag made history!

During the anxious days that preceded the decisive trial of the issue, the young American commander kept to his post through the exercise of an iron will. The fever had not relaxed its hold upon him, and it was by sheer resolution that he remained at his arduous task. Each day he watched with keen concern for the expected appearance of Barclay. It was the look-out in the mast-head of the Lawrence whose "Sail ho!" electrified Perry's fleet on the pleasant morning of Sept. 10, 1813, a date familiar to every schoolboy for the epitome of effort which it spells.

Rapidly the ships of the squadron were signaled "Enemy in sight," and "Get under way," while, under the added impetus of the shouted orders of boatswains, all hands scrambled in preparation to leave anchorage. It was still very early. The mists yet rose over the waters while the air was tinged with the first faint autumnal chill. A light wind blew softly from the southwest, and a few dark, ragged clouds rolled across the sky, spitting fine showers of

rain; but presently the sun, having cleared the eastern horizon, peered through the murk, routing the shrouding masses and the mists, so that soon the British sails appeared, small but distinct, far to the northwest. Toward them, beating up against a light wind, enlisting the aid of oars, worked Perry's ships, threading their way among interminable islands to the open lake; while the last breath of the mists vanished, the chill crept from the air before the steady flare of the rising sun, and the rear-guard of the fleeing clouds disappeared from view beyond the distant line of merging sky and sea. At ten o'clock, when the squadron had wholly emerged from between the environing islands of Put-in Bay into the open lake, with the British fleet a half-dozen miles away, the day was redolent of rare autumnal beauty: a grim contrast indeed to the red, ensuing scenes that were to be inseparably associated with its immortal glory.

To Perry, distressingly ill with his malady, the cry of the look-out had been a veritable elixir. From that moment he forgot his ailing body; his unconquerable spirit dominated it and made of the man that aggressive, dynamic

fighting machine which, insensible to reverses, fought on and on, unwearied, unrelaxing, until what for most would have been the end, was to him only the beginning; a beginning that could have no other end than that of ultimate victory. For it was the almost incredibly compelling personality of this man, the exertion of an influence as powerful in the time of stress as that of the great Englishman whom he emulated, that won for the Americans, against gallant odds, on that memorable day upon the waters of Erie.

The variability of the wind made it a difficult matter for the American squadron to get within favorable striking distance of Barclay's waiting fleet. An attempt to gain the weather-gage by beating to windward, because of the light airs, proved abortive. Perry ordered his sailing-master, William Vigeron Taylor, to run to the leeward of the islands. "You will, in that case, have to engage the enemy to leeward," remonstrated the sailing-master. "To windward or to leeward, they shall fight to-day," replied the Commodore grimly.

And they waited to fight, these British ships stationed in readiness, as doggedly determined

as the fearless opponents that essayed to reach them, confident in the masterful leadership of a maimed veteran who had served with honor under that great chief whom the untried young American opposite had taken for his model. No farcical demonstration here, no fruitless jockeying, no bootless shots exchanged at illimitable range, no wild scurryings after one another up and down a lake, which afforded, in spoils, little more than a few helpless, discouraged merchantmen; no retirement of each to his own port to await the building of another ship or two to "equalize the forces," nothing of unfettered loquacity in the shape of interminable reports, transmitted by each to his Government, reciting the multitudinous reasons for not doing the things that ought to have been done. Nothing of these, and the absence of them made the name of Erie immortal. Headed by such men, it was but natural that the flotillas should sweep with the first fair wind into a death-grapple whose finish should, in its decisiveness, afford a shining opportunity for the employment of words of graphic brevity in its announcement.

Preparations had been made to sail to lee-

ward, when a sudden favorable shift of the wind allowed the American squadron to keep the weather-gage, clearing the islands. In the meantime, Perry, on the Lawrence, had addressed a few earnest words to his men, who cheered. He then hoisted the battle-flag, with its white-lettered appeal, to the mast-head. It was the battle-signal, and cheers were roared from the deck of every ship in the squadron. The ships, moving slowly toward the enemy, were wholly prepared; the final gruesome touch was administered in the wetting of the decks and the sprinkling of sand upon them, that they might not be too slippery when blood should flow. It was the lull before the storm, and Perry, knowing well that there would be grim business afoot at the dinner-hour, ordered refreshments distributed.

The Americans had nine vessels engaged in the action of that day, the Lawrence, commanded by Commodore Perry, and having 20 guns; the second, brig Niagara, 20 guns, commanded by Captain Elliott; the Caledonia, Purser McGrath, 3; schooner Ariel, 4 guns (one of which burst early in the action), Lieutenant Packet commanding; Scorpion, 2, Sailing-Mas-

ter Champlin; Somers, 2, and 2 swivels, Sailing-Master Almy; sloop Trippe, 1, Lieutenant Smith; schooner Tigress, 1, Master's Mate McDonald; Porcupine, 1, Midshipman Senat. The Ohio, Sailing-Master Dobbins, did not participate, having been sent to Erie for supplies. The American squadron had 54 guns, all told.

The British fleet comprised the ship Detroit, new and strongly built, mounting long 24's, 18's and 12's, 19 guns, one on pivots, and 2 howitzers; Queen Charlotte, 17; schooner Lady Prevost, 13; brig Hunter, 10; sloop Little Belt, 3; schooner Chippewa, 1, and 2 swivels; total, 63 guns.

The engagement occurred at a point ten miles north of Put-in Bay. As the American squadron moved up, Barclay, awaiting the attack, stretched his fleet in a line square across the wind, as close together as possible to work effectively, with the Detroit at the head and the small Chippewa under her bows. The Detroit was the flagship. Next her was the Hunter. The Lawrence, flanked by the Scorpion and Ariel on the left and by the brig Caledonia on the right, moved forward to engage

the three British boats named above. The Niagara was to take care of the Queen Charlotte, while the Somers, Porcupine, Tigress and Trippe were to remain discreetly astern and engage the Lady Prevost and Little Belt.

In order to employ his armament to the best advantage, it was necessary for Perry to engage the enemy as closely as possible. On the other hand, it was for Barclay's interest to wage the battle from a further distance, if he could. The crews on the American ships and their British opponents found the long wait trying enough, as the squadron of Perry slowly drifted with the light wind toward the enemy. The American Commodore paced the deck of the Lawrence incessantly, the calm, impassive face in strange contrast to the eyes, which fairly burned with excitement. From time to time he paused a moment to speak to some of his eager men. He stopped by one long gun. The men who manned it were lounging in easy attitudes, waiting the word. In appearance they were picturesque enough. Stripped to the waist, full-muscled and with folded arms, handkerchiefs bound about their tousled heads to keep their long hair from falling over their eyes, they were

watching the British ships with an air oddly impersonal, mildly nonchalant. It was enough then; a little later they would be veritable loosed demons, firing like mad and with deadly aim, swearing great, round oaths with every fresh charge rammed home. They were all veterans from the immortal Constitution.

Perry surveyed them in silence for a moment. "I need not say anything to you," he finally observed. "You know how to beat those fellows." And the men grinned.

He halted a moment by another little group, comprised of men who had accompanied him from Newport. "Ah," said he, "here are the Newport boys. They will do their duty, I warrant." A ringing cheer made a satisfactory reply.

At a quarter before noon, when the flagships were still over a mile apart and the little American gunboats had fallen far behind, the sound of a bugle was heard from the deck of the Detroit, and the British bands fell with spirit to the playing of "Rule, Brittania." A little later a hearty British cheer roared out, and, with a thunderous detonation, a solid shot from one of the flagship's long guns came bound-

ing over the water toward the advancing Lawrence. It fell short, but the next, which arrived five minutes later, was well aimed, and passed through the bulwarks of Perry's ship. The crew, eager for retaliation, sprang to the guns, but Perry stayed them. "Steady, boys! Steady!" he cried and they fell back. He had determined to engage the enemy closely, and the fleet moved on in silence, whilst signals were sent from the flagship for each ship to engage its specified antagonist. For ten minutes following the initial shot the squadron swept on, when Stephen Champlin,* the Commodore's cousin, in command of the little Scorpion, fired the first American shot, as he was destined also to fire the last in this engagement.

Barclay had concentrated his fleet to the best advantage, which fact was made apparent during the interval after the initial shot, while the Lawrence and the other American ships

*Stephen Champlin was at this time 24 years old, having been born in South Kingston, Rhode Island, November 17, 1789. His father was a volunteer soldier in the Revolution. His mother was a sister of Commodore Perry's father, making the two commanders first cousins. He was the last survivor of the nine commanders in Perry's squadron at the Battle of Lake Erie.

were holding their fire till they should sail up to conveniently close quarters. The American squadron while attempting to get up within satisfactory range, became scattered. The smaller vessels had fallen so far behind that when the battle began the Trippe was more than two miles away from the enemy. The Lawrence was making every effort to get close to the Detroit. Barclay's squadron was so placed that the Hunter and the Queen Charlotte were enabled, together with the Detroit, to pour in a destructive fire upon the Lawrence, which the British Commodore had determined to first destroy, and then cut the remainder of the American fleet to pieces. By the time Champlin's shot opened Perry's battle, the Lawrence was already the worse for wear; and she soon was bearing the brunt of the attentions of thirty-four heavy guns, with an occasional additional morsel, by way of dessert, from the Lady Prevost, which stood fifth in Barclay's battle line. Flanked by the schooners Ariel and Scorpion, without bulwarks, and with but six guns between them, the doomed Lawrence moved unfalteringly into a veritable smoke-laden, roaring pit of death. The Detroit, the Hunter and the

Queen Charlotte had formed a crescent around one side and the stern of the Lawrence, the Hunter being able to fairly rake the flagship fore and aft. The murderous crescent, with occasional broadsides from the Lady Prevost, had already worked awful havoc with the Lawrence by the time Perry had worked his ship to within half a musket shot of the Detroit. Then, wholly undismayed, though the carnage was already terrific, his men giving blow for blow, working like fiends, poured broadside after broadside into the Detroit; while the furious storm that was tearing out the very vitals of the Lawrence continued, remorseless, unabated.

The little schooners, which had accompanied the flagship, kept to their posts, fighting bravely though comparatively unharmed. The grim attentions of the enemy in that entire quarter were wholly devoted to the Lawrence; and the fight that was made by the men on that battered brig, against hopeless odds, will live on as one of the most stirring traditions of the nation's histories of naval warfare.

It was a quarter past noon when the Lawrence had gotten into the thickest of the fire.

Soon after Champlin's shot had opened the battle for the Americans, the flagship, while advancing toward the Detroit, had begun firing upon her with her long bow-gun, a 12-pounder, after which the action speedily became general. The Caledonia was equipped with long guns, and her work was effective from the beginning against the Chippewa, Detroit and Hunter, to which trio she had been assigned. Captain Elliott, in the Niagara, instructed to engage the Queen Charlotte, was some distance back and was unable to make adequate use of his carronades. Though she had twenty guns, but a single long 12 was of use at first until Elliott wheeled another into position. The pair were served vigorously until most of the ammunition of their caliber was gone. The smaller vessels were still too far back to render any efficient service. Perry, seeing early in the engagement that his ships would have to draw closer to the enemy, transmitted trumpeted orders for all the ships of the squadron to make sail and engage Barclay at close quarters. This order was transmitted by Captain Elliott, the second in command, but the Niagara remained well back, continuing to work her long

guns. The Lawrence, Scorpion, Ariel and Caledonia had sailed up into close quarters. Perry supposed at noon that he was close enough for good service with his carronades and opened with the first division of his battery upon the Detroit's starboard side. His shots fell short, however, while the concentrated fire of the enemy worked terrible havoc with the Lawrence. The Caledonia and Hunter were now hotly engaged. The Niagara had failed to come to close quarters with the Queen Charlotte, which vessel took advantage of the opportunity to place herself in a position where she could assist in the annihilation of the American flagship, which, at a quarter past noon, had gotten within musket-shot distance of her desired quarry, the Detroit. The Queen Charlotte passed the Hunter and took a position astern of the Detroit, from which point of vantage she poured in broadsides upon the buffeted Lawrence.

Barclay's tactics, well planned, were up to now eminently successful. The smaller ships of Perry's squadron were far to the rear, of scarcely any service, and the Niagara was rendering but little more. The Caledonia was

working gallantly, but was too busily occupied with her own antagonist to be able to do much for the Lawrence. The assistance rendered the latter by the Scorpion and Ariel, while gallant enough, through their size could be but small against such odds. As for the American flagship herself, she was fairly hemmed within a crashing, detonating wall of smoke-enshrouded, fiery death. Barclay had planned well. It was a masterly conception judged by the grim standards of war. With his opponent's flagship sunk or forced to strike her flag, with the leading spirit disposed of, it would be a comparatively easy matter, he reckoned, to capture or disperse the remainder of a fleet disorganized because robbed of its mainstay. So, to this grim end, an end which for a time seemed inevitable of accomplishment, the British ships poured swift death and the torments of anguished wounds into the staggering, fighting hulk, which the worst furies of the raging storm could not subdue.

Given many another man than Oliver Hazard Perry, many another of proved gallantry and honorable career, to have walked the deck of the Lawrence that day, and the issue of Erie

had resulted differently. It was a fight in which men's souls were tried by fire; any faltering in high places would have been fatal. Many a gallant man in Perry's place, counting his cause as lost, would have early in that seething storm lost heart of hope and hauled his colors down. But just as relentlessly as Barclay, with his gallant crews behind him, pursued the well-planned means to the sanguinary end, so did the shell-torn brig, dominated by a lion heart, indomitably resist as long as a glazing eye was left to aim the shots or hands to ram them home.

For two long hours, hours crowded with hopelessness and horror, the flagship weathered the storm, until, helpless and done, her last gun silenced, the abandonment occurred which was to lead to victory. A grim record indeed, the tale of that stubborn, losing fight against overpowering odds. The wardroom of the vessel, used as a cockpit, was mostly above water, the brig being shallow. The wounded were taken there and shots from the enemy pierced their refuge and added to the horrors of the situation. The deck planks thinly roofed them from the din above; while crimson streams

continually dripped down upon them through the seams of the flooring. Instances could be multiplied of the horrors which reddened those decks, but few will suffice. Lieutenant Brooks, of the marines, while speaking confidently to Perry in the midst of the engagement, was struck in the thigh by a cannon-ball and hurled to the opposite side of the deck. In his anguish he shrieked for his commander to kill him. The Commodore directed marines to carry him below, where he shortly died, gasping some pathetic instructions concerning his affairs. Perry's young brother, a boy of thirteen, beginning his career as a midshipman, was knocked down by a hammock which had been driven in by a cannon-ball. The Commodore feared that he was killed, but he leaped to his feet uninjured, and remained upon the deck. Previous to this, two musket balls had passed through the lad's hat and his clothing had been torn by splinters. Perry stepped up to a seaman, the captain of one of the gun crews who was having difficulty with his piece, the forelock being broken. The seaman exclaimed, "Sir, my gun behaves shamefully!" He then leveled the gun, and, while taking aim, was

rent by a cannon-ball; while Perry, who stood next him, was unharmed. Again, while the Lawrence's Second Lieutenant was standing close by the Commodore, he was struck in the breast by a chain shot. Having passed through the bulwark it but knocked him down, stunning him. Perry assisted him to his feet, when the Lieutenant, with the utmost nonchalance, thrust the shot into his pocket, remarking, "A souvenir!" and resumed his duties. Lieutenant Yarnell, intrepidly associated with the story of that day, dressed like a common seaman, had his neck and head bound with red bandanas, stanching previous wounds. A splinter had been driven through his nose, swelling it hideously. The blood from his wounds covered his face and neck. In this plight he came to the Commodore, at the height of the action, coolly informing him that every officer of his division had been killed. Perry detailed men to take the vacant places. Soon afterward Yarnell, bleeding from fresh wounds, returned to say that the reinforcements were all dead or wounded. "You must make out for yourself," returned Perry, "I have no men left to give you." Yarnell returned to aim and fire his

guns with his own hands, as his chief was to do later. And through it all, with men dropping on every side mangled and dying, the spirit to do and die raged in a veritable flame. One seaman in command of a gun rushed frenziedly to Perry, and bringing his blackened hands down upon the Commodore's shoulders, cried, "For God's sake, sir, give me some more men!" Every man of his crew had been killed or wounded. With the action at its worst, with the decimated deck no longer able to furnish men enough for the work at hand, Perry called for the surgeon, busy in the cockpit, to send up one of his six assistants. In a few minutes another was summoned, and so on till all had come. Perry summoned once again, but the surgeon replied that he was now alone. "Are there any of the wounded able to pull on a rope?" cried the Commodore. And crawling blindly, painfully up to the deck came two or three blood-drenched heroes to lay hold with their ebbing strength and assist in pulling the last gun into position. When Perry, cool and unshaken in the midst of the hurricane of death, chanced to glance at the bleeding wounded who lay stretched upon the deck, he

invariably found their faces turned toward him; a tribute moving enough in those awful hours. Out of all the Lawrence's officers, Perry and his young brother were the only ones unhurt in the engagement, though in the thick of it from first to last. Down in the cockpit, where the wounded were taken, mortality entered and worked havoc. Midshipman Lamb, with a shattered arm, was attended by the surgeon, and, while moving forward to lie down, was struck by a round-shot which crashed through the brig's side and killed him instantly. Another shot killed a Narragansett Indian who had been wounded, and others sustained grievous additional wounds while those received previously upon the deck were receiving attention. And meanwhile gun after gun of the Lawrence was dismounted; great splinters of wood torn from the brig's timbers launched forth, jagged javelins of death, tearing quivering human flesh; rigging and sails swung and flapped in severed strands and tattered shreds; crunching missiles bored and ground through bone and vitals; oaths died in fleeting, gasping prayers; death stalked the deck, while always there grew in appalling reverber-

ations the rolling thunder of the murderous storm.

And so on without pause or respite, until the Lawrence had left but a single gun; that gun which the wounded crawled from the cockpit to assist in hauling into position. With the Commodore himself helping to heave at the ropes of the gun-tackles, she was drawn up and her muzzle rolled out through the port, Perry himself aiming and firing the last shot from the brig. The next hostile broadside silenced the remaining gun and severely wounded Purser Hambleton, who stood close by Perry. With that the Commodore turned from the final forlorn hope to look about his stricken brig. Dead men lay upon the deck and the groans and cries of the wounded sounded from it and from the cockpit below. The vessel was riddled with gaping holes; she rolled with the swells, a helpless wreck. Twenty-two men had been killed and sixty-one wounded; but fourteen remained unhurt, nine of whom were common seamen. Of all the execution sustained by individual ships that day, and both squadrons suffered severely, all paled by comparison with that inflicted upon the Lawrence.

The guns of the Lawrence were now stilled and no more signals came from her commander. It is probable that Elliott now believed Perry to be slain, and himself commander of the squadron. The Niagara had kept far away; she and her crew were yet fresh. Though Elliott had personally passed Perry's order for close conflict, he had not himself taken advantage of it, but had continued to comply with his original order to keep at half-cable length behind the Caledonia on the line. He had been ordered likewise to engage the Queen Charlotte; but when that vessel had left her original station to join in the destruction of the Lawrence, the Niagara had not followed her.

But when the growl of the Lawrence's last gun had sounded, and she seemed a dead thing rolling on the waters, Elliott hailed the Caledonia, ordering Lieutenant Turner to leave the line and approach the Hunter in close conflict, affording the Niagara an opportunity to relieve the Lawrence. The Caledonia responded and was soon desperately engaged with the Hunter at close quarters. The breeze had freshened. The Niagara's spare canvas unfurled in white, billowing clouds, and she leaped ahead;

but not toward the Lawrence. Instead, she bore away toward the head of Barclay's squadron, passing the Lawrence, still withered by a galling fire, to windward. Elliott sent a boat to the Lawrence for ammunition to replenish his dwindling stock. As the Niagara bore down, returning vigorously the defiant broadsides flung at her from the Queen Charlotte, Lady Prevost and Hunter, and as she drew abreast of the Lawrence's larboard beam, a half-mile distant from that unheeded vessel, there occurred the sublimest passage in the Epic of Erie; the passage whose recital will thrill the blood of the generations as long as the world shall love her heroes; which will be at the end as it has been from the beginning.

To Perry, aboard the shattered Lawrence, even yet indomitable, unconquered; still standing erect, unsubdued, amid the debris of his poor, smashed ship, the crashing broadsides of the fighting Caledonia were renewed alarums; the spread of the sails of the rushing Niagara were wide-flung wings of Hope. The Commodore watched the approach eagerly; relief was at hand. When he saw that she was passing him,

a sudden grim inspiration fired his soul; an inspiration that was fraught with the issue of that momentous day.

From the decks of the battling, implacable British ships rose deep-throated cheers that rivaled the din of the guns, which lessened perceptibly for a space. From the masthead of the helpless Lawrence, the big blue burgee, the white-lettered bugle call upon an azure field, had come fluttering down. The pennant followed; but the Stars and Stripes remained. It was then not a surrender, as the enemy had thought. What then was it? The next moment furnished a reply. For out from under the lee of the battered hulk darted a small boat, propelled by oars in the hands of brawny seamen, straight for the passing Niagara. Erect in the stern stood a splendid stalwart figure, the folds of the big blue burgee and the pennant draped over the broad shoulders, the face still calmly impassive, the eyes smouldering. Commodore Perry was transferring his flag.

On sped the boat, followed at first by a few pitiful quavering cheers from poor dying devils on the deck of the abandoned hulk, watching the departing boat with wistful eyes. Then,

from the decks of the other ships of the American squadron, their crews now thoroughly comprehending, arose a very tempest of mad cheers. Half surrounded as it was by the enemy's ships, the boat swept on through a perfect roaring tornado, the commander, still strangely impassive, erect in the stern. Cannon balls, grape, canister and musket-shot fairly poured from the enemy's decks. Perry's young brother pleaded with the Commodore to sit down, but he seemed oblivious. Finally his oarsmen, fearful for his safety, flatly refused to row longer unless he sat down, when he complied. The men then redoubled their efforts, speeding toward the now waiting Niagara. The storm from the British guns, if possible, grew in violence; the oars were splintered by musket balls; heavy shot plunged into the water close at hand, drenching the crew with spray; death hovered hungrily about the boat, his grisly clasp seemingly restrained by a higher Power. As by a miracle the small craft's tenants escaped unscathed. A round shot finally came tearing through the boat's side. In a trice Perry had slipped off the epauletted coat of his rank, the garment he had donned upon

leaving the Lawrence's deck, replacing the blue nankeen jacket he had worn up to that time, and stopped the hole with it. The boat reached the side of the Niagara in safety, a quarter of an hour after leaving the Lawrence. The cheers of the Americans, grown stilled by anxiety during the perilous trip, once more rang out jubilantly.

Perry, disheveled, smoke-begrimed, quickly boarded the Niagara. He was met at the gangway by Elliott, who saw in the man whom he had supposed dead, evidence enough of undiminished vigor.

"How goes the day?" asked Elliott. It was as though he realized that he had been too far away to tell for himself.

"Bad enough," replied Perry, grimly. "Why are the gunboats so far astern?"

"I'll bring them up," said Elliott, quickly.

"Do so," responded the Commodore, shortly; and Elliott, springing into the boat just vacated by his chief, set off to hurry the lagging smaller vessels. Meanwhile Perry quickly prepared for the master stroke which won for his squadron the battle.

When Perry left the Lawrence he placed her

in charge of Yarnell, with discretionary powers to hold out or surrender as his judgment and the circumstances should dictate. The Lieutenant, after consulting with Lieutenant Forrest and Sailing-Master Taylor, had hauled down the flag of the helpless brig, that, for humanity's sake, the opposing fire should cease. A triumphant cheer arose from the British, which was heard by the wounded in the flagship's cockpit. Being sadly informed of the reason, there arose despairing cries of "Sink the ship!" Their spirits, indomitable in maimed, suffering bodies, were to be gladdened a half-hour later, when the Commodore was once more to tread the bloody deck.

Elliott hurried in his small boat to accelerate the gunboats. Ordering them to use sails and oars with vigor and join the larger ships ahead, he went aboard the Somers, "displaying gallantry," says an account, "till the close of the action." Perry had rapidly inventoried the Niagara. She was in perfect condition for battle. The pennant and burgee were quickly hoisted, the signal displayed for close action, while the crews of the squadron cheered. The Niagara hove to, her course was altered, her

guns double-shotted, and she bore down upon the British line, now but half a mile away. Perry had resolved upon one supreme effort to break that deadly line.

He succeeded. The Niagara, sweeping irresistibly on, passed at half pistol-shot distance between the Lady Prevost and Chippewa on her larboard, and the Detroit, Queen Charlotte and Hunter on her starboard, pouring in withering broadsides as she passed. The Queen Charlotte, having lost her commander and several of her principal officers, in a moment of confusion fouled the Detroit, both of them being prevented through this mishap from returning with any effect the terrible fire now poured into them. Perry, having pierced the line, now ranged ahead, rounded to and raked the two distressed vessels with terrific broadsides. As the Niagara dashed through the line her fire literally cut the Lady Prevost to pieces. The men, fairly swept from the deck, had to take refuge below, excepting the ship's commander, Lieutenant Buchan, who had distinguished himself under Nelson in the Battle of the Nile. Buchan had been shot through the face with a musket ball, fired by one of a corps

of marines. Perry saw him standing alone, leaning on the companionway, his wounded face in his hands. He was watching the Niagara with a fixed glare so strange that Perry at once ordered the marines to cease their fire, as it was evident that resistance had ended aboard the Prevost, and her commander was seriously injured. It developed that the strange appearance of Buchan was due to the fact that he had become suddenly crazed with his wound. In the meantime, the rest of Perry's fleet had responded nobly to the Niagara's stirring example. The disabled Lawrence having drifted astern of her place in the line, the Caledonia took her position against the Detroit, while the Trippe took the Caledonia's place against the Hunter. Turner and Holdup, commanding the Caledonia and Trippe, respectively, had exchanged signals to board the Detroit, which project was abandoned when they saw the Niagara, with the Commodore's pennant aloft, begin the dash that broke the British line. So the Caledonia quickly followed the Niagara into the thick of it. The stiffening breeze had meanwhile brought up the Somers, the Tigress and the Porcupine, so that the entire squadron,

sans the exhausted Lawrence, was now for the first time adequately in the battle. The inspiring example of their commander had done its work; the crews fought as if unwearied. The result was appalling in its swiftness. Eight minutes after the Niagara's dash through the British line; the Detroit struck her colors. She was quickly followed by the Queen Charlotte and Lady Prevost, and a little later by the Hunter. The Chippewa and Little Belt attempted their escape toward Malden, but Champlin in the Scorpion and Holdup in the Trippe overtook and brought them back; Champlin firing the last gun of the battle during the chase. It was three o'clock when the flag of the Detroit was lowered; but the fugitives had so nearly escaped, that it was ten at night before the pursuing American vessels returned with them.

When the embattled roar ceased, and the thick smoke drifted away, the two squadrons found themselves intermingled. While, to preserve what life remained aboard of her, the flag of the Lawrence had been struck, the hulk had not been boarded by the enemy. When the shrouding smoke lifted, revealing the victory, shouts

of joy sounded from her deck and the national banner was again hoisted to the mast-head. The wounded in the wardroom added their feeble cheers.

The joy of the American crews when the surrender occurred may be imagined, when it is reflected that it was the first time an American squadron had encountered one of a rival nation in battle alignment, and it was the first capture recorded of an entire British fleet. So that one can sense in some measure, the uplift of spirit in which, when the feat had been accomplished, Perry penciled on the back of an old letter held upon his navy cap, that simple, stirring message to General Harrison:

"We have met the enemy and they are ours; two ships, two brigs, one schooner and one sloop. Yours, with great respect and esteem,

"O. H. PERRY."

A little later followed the second dispatch, to the Secretary of the Navy, as follows:

"U. S. Brig Niagara,
"off the Western Sister, Head of Lake Erie,"
Sept. 10, 1813, 4 p. m.

"Sir—It has pleased the Almighty to give to the arms of the United States a signal vic-

tory over their enemies on this lake. The British squadron, consisting of two ships, two brigs, one schooner and one sloop, have this moment surrendered to the force under my command after a sharp conflict.

"I have the honor to be, sir, very respectfully, your obedient servant,

"O. H. PERRY."

It had been a hard, fierce fight, with equal honor to both. Vessels of both squadrons had been shattered, especially the flagships. There had been 68 persons killed and 190 wounded in the three hours of the engagement. Of these the Americans lost 123, 27 of whom were killed; and the British 135, 41 being killed. Next to the Lawrence, the Niagara sustained the greatest loss, most of which occurred in those final few minutes. While she had but 2 men killed, there were 25 wounded. The losses of the other ships were inconsiderable on the American side. For the British the Detroit was the greatest sufferer. Commodore Barclay, who had lost an arm at Trafalgar, was first wounded in the hip, but gallantly remained upon the deck. Later a shot crushed the blade of his right shoulder, depriving him

of his remaining arm. His wounds were for some days considered mortal. Captain Finnis, of the Queen Charlotte, the second in command of the squadron, was mortally wounded and died that night.

Following the sending of his dispatches, the American Commodore started for the melancholy wreck of the Lawrence, having determined to receive the formal surrender from the brave foemen upon her deck. As he stepped upon it, greeting his friend, Purser Hambleton, he said, "The prayers of my wife have prevailed in saving me."* Dr. Parsons says, "It was a time of conflicting emotions when he stepped upon deck. The battle was won and he was safe, but the deck was slippery with blood and strewn with the bodies of twenty officers and men, seven of whom had sat at table with us at our last meal, and the ship resounded everywhere with the groans of the wounded. Those of us who were spared and able to walk met him at the gangway to welcome him on board, but the salutation was a

*She was originally Miss Elizabeth Mason, daughter of Dr. Mason, of Newport, to whom the Commodore was married in 1810. She survived him. Three sons and a daughter were born to them.

silent one on both sides; not a word could find utterance."

Then, standing upon the crimsoned deck, Perry received the British officers, one from each of the captured vessels. One by one these saddened visitors presented their swords; one by one the conqueror gently refused them. With deep concern he made inquiry for their wounded commander and their mates, and they retired feeling to the full the strange duality of the rarely great nature, the heart that is at once savagely leonine and deep in exhaustless wells of human sympathies. When they had gone, at last overcome with the fatigue that numbed his fever-wasted body, the Commodore stretched himself upon the deck, in the midst of that grim, guarding cordon of the dead, and slept for hours as deep as they.

With the coming of the twilight of that day, the dead seamen of the two squadrons, wrapped in rude shrouds and weighted with a cannon ball at the feet of each, were, after the reading of the simple, sublime burial service of the Anglican Church, lowered over the ship's sides to graves in the deep. At nine the next night, the squadrons, victor and vanquished, weighed

anchor and sailed tranquilly into Put-in Bay Harbor. The interval had been occupied in securing the prisoners, repairing the ships and rigging temporarily, and in other necessary work. The Lawrence could make but sluggish sail, and, as for the Detroit and Queen Charlotte, they were shattered from bow to stern. It was impossible to place one's hand hardly anywhere on their port sides without touching the impression of a shot. Many balls, canister and grape were found lodged in their bulwarks, which were too thick to be penetrated by the American carronades, unless within pistol-shot distance. Their masts were so shattered that they fell overboard in a storm after the squadrons got into the bay.

Two days after the battle three American and three British officers were buried on the margin of South Bass Island, with the same solemn ceremonies and rites, in the presence of their respective countrymen. The spot selected, wild and solitary, with the picturesque beauty that can only belong to such a one as untrammeled nature holds in fee, was such as to deepen the impressions of those witnessing the scene in such force as to render them enduring for a lifetime.

The heroes thus interred were Lieutenant Brooks and Midshipmen Lunt and Clarke, of the American service; and Captain Finnis and Lieutenants Stokoe and Garland, of the British flotilla.

Perry, who was frankly sensible of the gallantry shown by his British rival, was quick to visit Barclay after the termination of the engagement. He caused every attention to be paid him. When the American Commodore sailed for Buffalo, Barclay was sufficiently recovered to accompany him. The fleet touched at Erie, whose citizens witnessed the spectacle of Perry and Harrison, leading the wounded Englishman, still unable to walk without assistance, to their lodgings. And no higher eulogy has been paid to Perry than that contained in the simple words of Commodore Barclay, himself of proved merit and loved by his men, which were spoken at a public dinner tendered him at Terrebone, in Canada. They were employed in the proposal of a toast, and were these: "To Commodore Perry, the gallant and generous enemy."

The following extract of a letter from Commodore Perry, written to the powers while

aboard the Ariel, at Put-in Bay, September 13, will serve to show his attitude toward his wounded enemy:

"I also beg your instructions respecting the wounded. I am satisfied that whatever steps I might take, governed by humanity, would meet your approbation. Under this impression I have taken upon myself to promise Captain Barclay, who is very dangerously wounded, that he shall be landed as near Lake Ontario as possible, and I had no doubt you would allow me to parole him."

On the 13th, also, Perry sent his letter to the Secretary of the Navy, giving the particulars of the action which resulted to the credit of his country and himself. It was in this letter that the following passage occurred—a passage that later caused so much controversy over the true facts of the case, and that the majority have always believed to have owed its introduction to Perry's native generosity:

"At half-past two, the wind springing up, Captain Elliott was enabled to bring his vessel, the Niagara, gallantly into close action; I immediately went on board of her, when he anticipated my wish by volunteering to bring the

schooners, which had been kept astern by the lightness of the wind, into close action."

Perry wrote the above letters while a furious gale was sweeping the lake from the southwest. He was preparing for the transportation of Harrison's army to Canada. He had made the Niagara his flagship, placing all the wounded Americans on board the Lawrence and the wounded British on board the Detroit and Queen Charlotte. The Niagara and lighter vessels of both squadrons were to serve as transports. It was this storm that brought down the masts of the disabled British vessels.

In concluding this chapter, no words can more fittingly be employed than those oft-quoted, prophetic ones in Washington Irving's biographical sketch of Perry, issued shortly after the battle. "In future times," he writes, "when the shores of Erie shall hum with busy population, when towns and cities shall brighten where now extend the dark and tangled forests; when ports shall spread their arms, and lofty barks shall ride where now the canoe is fastened to the stake; when the present age shall have grown into venerable antiquity, and the mists

of fable begin to gather round its history, then will the inhabitants look back to this battle we record as one of the romantic achievements of the days of yore. It will stand first on the page of their local legends and in the marvelous tales of the borders."

CHAPTER VII

CONTROVERSIES

IT was a natural sequence, when the issue of Erie had been decided, that there should arise interminable discussions by the partisans of each side concerning the relative strength and weakness of the opposing squadrons. The conquerors had a victory to glorify; the beaten a defeat to explain. The years immediately following the battle were filled with exhaustive presentments of both sides of the shield. The natural tendency on the part of both, generally considered, was to exaggerate the advantages possessed by the opponent and to accentuate the disadvantages under which one's own side labored. It was too early for an interested party, unless he possessed exceptional breadth and an ideal judicial temperament, to strike a just balance. There is no doubt that much that was written on both sides at the time, through the hot spur of defiant patriotism, was nothing short

of absurd. But the years have their winding sheets ever in readiness for the trivial and petty, and it is only the things worth while that can successfully defy the withering breath of time. To-day, the little contributory incidents are forgotten in the grand ensemble of a great fight well fought; of the crews of warring ships that vied with each other in gallantry; of a surrender with honor to an intrepid foe; of great guns, a few hours previously, in deadly, roaring rivalry, booming solemn salutes in grim accordance while American and Briton buried their dead; of the subsequent mutual esteem of brave commanders, a friendship that endured. In the contemplation of these, the salient features of the battle, there may well creep away the last gibing ghosts of rancor and bitterness engendered by war, that monster to be blotted out in the millenium of God!

A volume might readily be filled with a rehearsal of the points emphasized in the various arguments by writers of both nations, that followed the event of Erie; but space forbids, and indeed there is no need of an exhaustive resume of the matter here. Something of men-

tion, however, may assist the reader in a general understanding of conditions, which is the sole excuse offered for the disturbance of certain of history's dry bones.

In the beginning, then, the Americans had nine vessels engaged in the action and the British six. In close action, however, which Perry had ordered, the contest was more nearly equal as to numbers than this statement would indicate, as the Somers, Porcupine and Tigress, gunboats, lagged far astern till near the close of the battle. Indeed, one authority* states that the Porcupine and Tigress "were unable to get into action." Moreover, the Niagara failed to come to close quarters, as ordered, till Perry had transferred his flag to her from the Lawrence, and Elliott had gone to bring up the lagging gunboats. As for the British, they had suffered seriously before Perry transferred his flag to the Niagara through an accident to the rudder of the schooner Lady Prevost, 13 guns, which had caused her to drop out of Barclay's line and far astern. Then, too, the fouling of the Detroit and Queen Charlotte, following the Niagara's dash through

*Burges' Perry and Elliott. Diagram No. 3.

the line, contributed largely to the success of that attack, backed as it was by most of Perry's other vessels.

As for armament, it is estimated that the American squadron threw in the battle 896 pounds of metal from 54 guns, the long guns throwing 288 pounds. The British squadron, while it had more guns, could not throw as much metal. Barclay's squadron could throw 459 pounds of metal at a broadside from 63 guns, 195 pounds being from long guns. "The smart Yankees," writes Roosevelt, "although Erie was in days' travel much further from a base of supplies than the British were, had created a fleet under the eyes of the British, whose superiority in long-gun metal was as three to two, and in carronade-metal greater than two to one." In commenting upon this, however, Spears says, "but it must be observed by every sailorman that this preponderance in weight of metal thrown was to a great extent nullified by the distribution of the American heavy long guns among the little merchant schooners which Perry had been forced to adopt. For the small vessels formed very unstable platforms, and a discharge from the big guns set

them rolling in a way to destroy accurate marksmanship. The British had nothing larger than a long 12 on their little vessels, and therein was wisdom."

Burges gives the following table, showing relative opposing armaments:

AMERICAN SQUADRON.	BRITISH SQUADRON.
Schooner Scorpion, 2 guns, 32-pounders.	Sloop Little Belt, 3 guns.
Schooner Ariel, 4 guns, 18's and 24's.	Ship Detroit, 19 guns.
Brig Lawrence 20 guns, 2 long 12's and 18 24's.	Brig Hunter, 10 guns.
Caledonia, 3 guns, 24 and 32-pounders.	Ship Queen Charlotte, 17 guns.
Niagara, brig, same armament as Lawrence.	Schooner Lady Prevost, 13 guns.
Schooner Somers, 2 32-pounders.	Schooner Chippewa, one gun and two swivels.
Schooner Porcupine, 1 32-pounder.	
Tigress, 1 32-pounder.	
Trippe, sloop, one 32.	

William James, in his "History of the Naval Actions of the War of 1812," published at Halifax, N. S., in 1816, gives the following particulars regarding the British armament. The Detroit, says he, mounted two 24's, one 18, six 12's and eight 9's, long guns, and one 24 and one 18-pounder carronade. The Queen Charlotte mounted three long 12's and 14 24-pounder carronades. The Lady Prevost

mounted three long 9's and 10 12-pounder carronades, one long 9 considered as shifting. The Hunter mounted two 6's, four 4's, two 2's, long guns, and two 12-pounder carronades. The two smaller vessels were equipped as stated above. The lately launched Detroit, Mr. James informs us, being destitute of armament, "it became necessary to strip a neighboring fort of its guns. Remoteness of situation and difficulties of carriage," he continues, "almost insuperable, now that the Americans had got the ascendancy on the lake, may afford some pretext for the half-equipped, deplorably manned state of the British squadron. But had not thirteen months elapsed since ministers were in possession of the American declaration of war?"

In the consideration of the vexed question regarding the superiority in force, as far as the personnel of the crews was concerned, it would seem wise to consult authorities of the time involved, since they must have enjoyed excellent opportunities for the securing of their materials at first hand. Niles' "Life of Perry," published in 1821, and James' "Naval Actions," referred to above and issued in 1816, contain full

information on this point from differing standpoints.

James states that the command of the British squadron on Erie had been refused by Captain Mulcaster, "on account of the exceedingly bad equipment of the vessels." Captain Barclay was then appointed, continues the account (though it is difficult to see from his previous record and the masterly conduct of his defense on that memorable 10th of September that this was anything of a retrogressive step), "and with a lieutenant, surgeon and nineteen rejected seamen of the Ontario squadron, he joined his command in June, 1813." Subsequently, says James, fifty-three seamen of the Dover troop-ship were sent to him, but then he had not more than 150 British seamen distributed among his six vessels, "the rest of the men being Canadians and soldiers." Here again the average American will be conscious of a feeling of irritation, caused by the proneness of the British at that time to explain defeats, by inference at least, by the recorded fact that they had to depend upon "Canadians." Since the arms of Canada have been at the disposal of Britain from the first, coupled with un-

swerving loyalty, this disposition seems decidedly ungracious, though to be sure it does not obtain as much as formerly. As for the soldiers, the ill-fated Lawrence at least was close enough throughout the action of Erie to suffer severely from a musketry fire as well as from the more formidable sweep of broadsides.

A significant fact, when considered in connection with the claims of Elliott made after the battle, is recorded in James' work. He states that the Lawrence, with her two smaller companions, came to close action with the Detroit, and that the Niagara, "supported also by two schooners, engaged the Queen Charlotte, keeping so far to windward as to render the latter's 24-pounder carronades entirely useless." Yet some of Elliott's officers claimed afterward that the Niagara was in close conflict throughout the battle. James says further that Perry left the Lawrence just before she struck and proceeded on board the Niagara, "then perfectly fresh from having remained so far to windward. The Detroit was now a perfect wreck, principally from the fire of the long 32's and 24's on board the

schooners, and in attempting to wear she fell on board the Queen Charlotte. The Lady Prevost, armed with 12-pounder carronades, was far to the leeward, with her rudder injured." He states that the other three vessels, owing to their size and armament, "are scarcely worth noticing."

Captain Barclay personally reported that "the weather-gage gave the enemy a prodigious advantage, as it enabled them not only to choose their position, but their distance also, which they did in such a manner as to prevent the carronades of the Queen Charlotte and Lady Prevost from having much effect, while their long guns did great execution, particularly against the Queen Charlotte."

The Detroit and Hunter, pursues James, had four different calibers of guns, all on one deck, and they were manned by Canadians and soldiers "wholly unacquainted with such service." Still, these guns did execution, as the Lawrence abundantly testified. The squadron had the misfortune to lose most of its principal officers and their seconds early in the action, still, as this historian records, the seamen and troops behaved with calmness and courage, emulating

the example of the few survivors of the Lawrence, the greatest sufferer of the battle.

Later on he says: "The British fleet, consisting partly of ships, and the American of only brigs and schooners, may give rise to an opinion that the former were superior in size. So far from it, the Lawrence and Niagara were each 40 tons larger than the Detroit, the largest vessel in our fleet. Of what size American schooners, or even gunboats, frequently are, will appear from a reference to the table of dimensions. This being an action between more than two vessels, the united tonnage on each side is, however, of little consequence. Nor does the relative numerical force in men afford a true estimate in force, as the bulk of the British crews consisted of persons totally unacquainted with such service. In both long guns and carronades the Americans had a decided advantage in the superiority of individual caliber, supposing even the gross weight of metal on each side to have been the same. But instead of that, an excess actually appears on the American side of two to one."

At close quarters the preponderance accentuated by James would have told, and did tell

in the closing moments of the battle. But it must be recollected that Elliott, on the Niagara, failed to obey Perry's order to close, and until shortly before the Commodore boarded her she was far to windward and working but two guns. Also, the smaller vessels that had failed to come close enough for effective work must not be forgotten.

James has this further to say in regard to armament: "In transmitting a 'statement of the relative force of the contending fleets,' the American Commodore is quite satisfied with enumerating the guns on each side. It was palpably evident that sixty-three was a higher number than fifty-four, and the American commander had no doubt fully ascertained, by his skill in figures, that he should obtain a much less favorable result were he to particularize the caliber. Suppose a British vessel, armed with ten guns, 2-pounders, had been captured by an American vessel, armed, like the Scorpion, with two guns on pivots, and those a long 32 and 24-pounder. According to Commodore Perry's mode of estimating force the former would be superior to the latter as five to one, when in reality the superiority of force would be

on the opposite side in the same proportion." This is a good argument, but it certainly does not apply wholly until near the end of the battle, because of the failure of some of Perry's ships to come within favorable striking distance until after he had shifted to the Niagara. Then, too, it will be remembered that their bulwarks rendered many shots directed against certain of the British ships abortive.

James states that on September 9, when lying at Amherstburg, Captain Barclay was anxiously waiting the arrival of a promised supply of seamen. So perfectly destitute of provisions was the post that there was not a day's flour in store and the crews were then on half-allowance of a great many things. Impelled by dread of famine, "the fleet sailed out, to risk a battle with the American squadron, then cruising off the port."

To turn to the presentment of facts from an American standpoint it is first necessary only to remind the reader of the difficulties met by Perry in the securing of men, munitions and supplies that are recorded in the foregoing portion of this work. If sloth dwelt in Britain's places of authority, so dwelt it also in Wash-

ington; if Barclay had reason to be discouraged oftentimes, so also frequently had Perry; if Barclay found that if things were to be done he himself must do them, so also did Perry. We have read how Perry, with but barely enough men to man a single brig, importuned the powers at Washington, and in reply received sharp complaints because "he did not co-operate with Harrison upon Canada." We have read also of the appeals made to his superior, Chauncey, on Ontario, and the attenuated results thereof; the chief commander reserving the most and the pick of his chafing flock at Sackets Harbor to play tag with the equally futile Yeo, across at Kingston. If Perry's fleet was larger than his enemy's, part of it came with vigorous swiftness from the lusty hewing of the forest. If his armament was more formidable, it was the result of his urgent and eternal pounding, and part of it had to be hoisted aboard of converted merchantmen, slow and unsatisfactory.

As for the force engaged, Niles states that the British complement of men exceeded Perry's by nearly a hundred, and that a greater portion of them were experienced seamen and sailors.

"The American fleet," he continues, "was built, equipped and manned in about three months, and consequently the crews of the vessels hastily collected. They were a mixed, and apparently an incongruous set of beings, comprising Americans from every part of the Union, Europeans and blacks. They had not been together long enough to become acquainted with each other or with the service. When the fleet first got over the bar at Erie, there were not more than half sailors enough to man it, and it could not have sailed had not a number of Pennsylvania militia volunteered their services. Although such was the character and condition of the sailors, the marines were still less qualified for their situation, so far as that depends upon experience and discipline, most of them having never before seen a square-rigged vessel. Nearly all of them were volunteers from the Pennsylvania militia on service at Erie, commanded by Colonel Rees Hill; and Kentuckians, of which about seventy entered as volunteers on board the fleet at Sandusky. Such were the men who . . . . in the first action of the kind which occurred between the two nations (meaning a battle by

squadrons), broke the charm of British invincibility. What they wanted in experience they made up in bravery. Yet, brave as they were, it required, under the disadvantageous circumstances attending them, the cool intrepidity, the consummate skill, and the exalted genius of Perry to lead them to victory and glory."

Niles' opinion of advantages enjoyed is radically different from that of James. The former says: "Not only did the enemy have the advantage as to the number and condition of the men by whom their fleet was manned, but likewise as to the fleet itself. As appears by the statement, they had the greatest number of guns, and they also had an advantage from their being of greater length. At the commencement of the action, the wind was in favor of the enemy, enabling them to choose their own position, which, from the great length of their guns, gave them great advantage."

In this matter, too, the ravages of the fever, from which Perry himself suffered, should not be forgotten. Shortly before the battle the fleet surgeon, Dr. P. Usher Parsons, was himself so ill that he had to be carried around on a cot to visit the sick, of which there were

then nearly a hundred prostrated. Many, however, recovered sufficiently to participate in that engagement. The excitement proved a veritable tonic.

As for the size of the ships engaged, it is stated that the big new brigs of the Americans were 110 feet long and 29 feet wide. They could have carried as merchantmen 300 tons. The schooners could not have carried more than from 60 to 80 tons of cargo and the sloop was the smallest of all. The big brigs were armed as salt-sea brigs are—with two long 12's and 18 short 32's; and the rest were armed with a heavy gun each. On the day of battle, according to the roll that drew prize-money, the force of men and boys connected with the fleet was 532. Of these 416 (the highest estimate), were on deck ready for the battle, and 16 more (according to Lossing), sick in their beds, left them and went to quarters; 432 men in all, of whom one-fourth were regular naval seamen, one-fourth raw militia, and one-fourth lake sailors. The short supply of principal officers may be gathered from the fact that midshipmen were in command of some of the smaller vessels.

In closing the remarks upon the merits of the forces, it is quite evident that neither Perry nor Barclay enjoyed the resources extended the Commodores who carried on the bootless warfare on Ontario throughout the war. Sackets Harbor and Kingston were principal depots for their respective Governments. The important operations were mutually expected to occur upon Ontario, and British and American energies were mainly directed toward elaborate preparations for the series of races sailed upon those waters during the war. Perry and Barclay labored against odds in preparing for the deciding of the issue, an issue unfalteringly met by them, while Chauncey and Yeo were busy dodging a similar one on the wide water to the east. In discussing the result of the battle, Lossing says:

"Justice to all demands the acknowledgment that the Americans and British carried on that terrible conflict with the greatest courage, fortitude and skill. It is also just to say that the British experienced what is termed 'ill-luck' from the beginning. First, the wind suddenly turned in favor of the Americans at the commencement of the action, giving them the weather-

gage; then the two principal British commanders were struck down early in the action; then the rudder of the Lady Prevost was disabled, which caused her to drift out of the line; the entanglement of the Detroit and Queen Charlotte gave the Niagara, under Perry, an opportunity to rake them severely; and lastly, the men of the British squadron had not, with the exception of those from the Royal Navy, received the training with guns that most of the Americans had just experienced, for they came out of port the morning of the battle."

Hon. Tristram Burges, in his "Battle of Lake Erie," has the following to say regarding Perry's original force at Erie: "Commodore Perry arrived at Erie, March 26, 1813. He carried with him from Newport 149 men and three boys, all of whom were volunteers. Some were commissioned officers, some warrant officers, some artificers, some seamen and some ordinary seamen. About one-third of the petty officers and men remained at Sackets Harbor, for service on Lake Ontario. This was done by the order of Commodore Chauncey, the commander on that lake. It greatly retarded the

operations of Perry on Lake Erie and was doubtless intended by Chauncey to have that effect. They had left Newport February 19, with Perry, and had volunteered from pure personal attachment to him." These hardy Rhode Islanders, with a few more shipwrights, smiths, caulkers, riggers and sailmakers, built from the stump six vessels—the Lawrence, Niagara, Ariel, Scorpion, Porcupine, and Tigress —which were launched, rigged and ready to sail in about ninety days after the first blow was struck. Burges continues to narrate how, at the pressing request of Perry, Commodore Chauncey sent him 100 men up from Ontario under the command of Captain Elliott. He took the command of the Niagara, previously commanded by Lieutenant Turner, of Newport. The 100 men had seen considerable service and were able-bodied. Most of them went aboard the Niagara with Elliott. The gallantry of that crew was at no subsequent time impugned, and in point of service its members were superior to the force on the Lawrence. This was remarked by Lieutenant Turner to Commodore Perry when Elliott was calling the men who came with him to their several stations, but

because Elliott had brought them with him Perry declined to alter the arrangement.

The circumstances that led to the publication in 1839 of Burges' work, which has for its subtitle, "Notices of Commodore Elliott's Conduct in that Engagement" (Erie), is explained by the author as follows: "After a lapse of more than twenty-two years from the day of that memorable battle, and fourteen years after Commodore Perry has been laid in his grave; while, during all this time, America and Europe have with one voice awarded to him the honor of this triumphant victory, Captain Elliott has very lately claimed that honor for himself. In the summer of 1836 a book . . . . was published entitled 'Biographical Notes of Commodore Jesse D. Elliott.' . . . . It contains a great number of letters addressed to Commodore Elliott and which could be controlled by no one but himself. The book must therefore be regarded as autobiography. Commodore Perry . . . . . says in his first dispatch to the Secretary of the Navy, 'It has pleased the Almighty to give the arms of the United States a signal victory over their enemies on this lake.' Commodore

Elliott, who that day commanded the Niagara, says in his book, 'It is not doing too much to say that to him (Jesse D. Elliott), the country is principally indebted for the honor of that splendid victory.' Later he repeats that 'it is proved to every candid reader's satisfaction that Captain Elliott was chiefly instrumental in gaining the victory on Lake Erie.' These are sweeping claims; they should be examined with candor and without resentment."

The examination which the Hon. Tristram Burges gave these claims was very searching and thorough. Though there are few to-day who remember that they were ever seriously considered worth investigating, a brief statement of facts connected with the old controversy may be of some interest here.

Burges accentuates the fact that at a quarter before noon of September 10, Perry gave the signal for close action, and then, by trumpet, sent down from ship to ship, along the whole line, a repetition of the order, "Engage your adversary, each as you come up, as before directed." This was to be in close action at half-cable's length. The Niagara was to engage the Queen Charlotte.

The Niagara, continues Burges, was astern of the Lawrence and the Caledonia abeam of the Queen Charlotte, in the line of approach, when the action commenced. She at first discharged her first division, but when their shot fell short of the Queen Charlotte, Captain Elliott did not order the helm put up to run down to within half-cable's length of his adversary, the Queen Charlotte, but, it is admitted by him in his book, that he directed his lieutenant to cease firing with the carronades and fire with the long 12's only. The Queen Charlotte had 20's to the Niagara's 24-pound carronades, but no long guns; and so, as she could neither reach the Niagara with her carronades nor run up against the wind and lay her alongside, she clapped on all sail and ran to the aid of the Detroit. Elliott's book styles this move a running away by the Queen Charlotte from the Niagara, but, dryly adds Burges, Elliott does not say that he made sail and ran down after her, as he might, for if there was wind enough for the Queen Charlotte to run away there was wind enough for the Niagara to run after her. He admits, instead, that he threw his topsail to the mast

and brailed up his jib so as to keep his position on the water as nearly as practicable. Burges figures from the subsequent positions of the British ships that the Niagara was for some time firing only at the Chippewa, of one gun, and that if after one o'clock the Niagara fired at the Detroit or Queen Charlotte, it must have been across the Lawrence and the Caledonia. Elliott observes in his work that it was evidently the plan of Barclay to disable the heaviest ships first, and mentions the terrific fire upon the Lawrence in support of his theory. Which passage draws the following searching inquiries from Burges:

"Why, then, in the name of bravery and fair companionship, did not he (Elliott) with the same wind and enough sail and as much speed bear down and follow her? Why did he, as he admits he did, fling his topsail to the mast, furl his top-gallant sails and brail up his jib? Why did he, for two hours after the Queen Charlotte left him, leave the Lawrence exposed to the murderous fire of 44 guns, supported only by nine in the Caledonia, Ariel and Scorpion, while he had 20, with the wind whistling into their muzzles, when he might have been

pouring the round, grape and canister, roaring out of them, against the enemy at half-musket shot? There is no evidence that a musket or more than one division of one broadside of the carronades was fired on board the Niagara, or that this was more than once discharged. It does not satisfactorily appear that after this first division anything was fired during the whole two hours and a half, except the two long 12's, or until Perry boarded her at forty-five minutes after two p. m."

During the fiery storm that burst in fury upon the doomed Lawrence there was a general regret, breathed by the wounded as they were carried below; by the dying as they lay weltering upon the deck. It found voice in despairing queries addressed to the commander by Yarnell, Taylor and Forrest. It was, "Why, why does not the Niagara come down and help us?"

She did not come till the intrepid Perry himself brought her, sweeping like an avenging, winged Nemesis, past the poor, broken Lawrence, crashing with thunderous broadsides through the sundered British line with her electrified, roaring mates behind.

At the close of the battle criticisms were

quietly passed between officers, and some began to write letters censuring the second in command upon the position held by his ship during the battle. As soon as Perry heard of this he sent Lieutenant Turner and Purser Hambleton, the one to the fleet the other to the camp, with entreaties that such criticisms should cease. It would ruin Elliott, he urged. Honor enough for all had been won; he desired that all his companions in arms should share it. By this effort tongues were stilled and all letters but one, which had been already sent, were stopped.

The famous clause in Perry's second dispatch to the Secretary of the Navy, sent September 13, Burges characterizes as a model of "benevolent ambiguity" for Elliott's protection. He said: "At half-past two, the wind springing up, Captain Elliott was enabled to bring his vessel, the Niagara, into close action." He did not say that Elliott did do so. "Every man in the fleet," says Burges, "knew that this was done by Perry himself. The public might infer that Elliott, when it was possible, did bring the Niagara gallantly into close action; and Elliott was willing the report

should be so left in this ambiguity. For though he requested Perry to place this 'enabled' at an earlier hour, he never requested him to say that he did do what he was enabled to do; that is, that he did come gallantly into close action. The time when he was so enabled was referred to one of his own lieutenants, Edwards, and to Lieutenant Turner, but they agreed that half-past two, as the Commodore had stated, was the correct time. This was the moment when Perry left the Lawrence to board the Niagara, and this establishes the fact that Commodore Elliott, who now claims the honor of the victory, had not at half-past two o'clock in the afternoon been in close action."

Burges introduces other facts, arrayed in convincing fashion, to indicate the Niagara's position previous to the time that Perry transferred his flag. Continuing, he explains how Elliott can claim no particular credit for the events which followed such transfer. He undertakes to indicate where Elliott was when the Detroit and Queen Charlotte surrendered. Wherever the Niagara was when Perry reached her, he writes, the Somers, Tigress and Porcupine were in succession and in a line a long

distance astern of her. This is proved by Elliott's own officers. Elliott, to bring up these boats, left the Niagara and rowed down the whole length of the line, or until he could hail the last boat, and rowed back and boarded the Somers, and so brought the gunboats down to engage in the action. Whatever distance these vessels, all dull sailers, were astern of the Niagara, Elliott had to row twice over that distance before he could get back to the point where he left Perry in the Niagara; then, in two or three minutes, starting under full sail, to run down over the space which he had rowed up in fifteen minutes. Burges concludes that these facts will give the whereabouts of Captain Elliott when the action terminated, which was in fifteen minutes, as Elliott proves, and in twenty, as Yarnell states, after Perry boarded the Niagara.

As Dr. Parsons was the only surgeon able to do duty in the American squadron, it was not till forty-eight hours after the battle that he found time to visit the wounded aboard the Niagara. Only two of them told him that they were wounded before Perry boarded that vessel. No one was killed on the Niagara while Elliott

was in command. Perry left the Lawrence utterly unmanageable. The Detroit, which had been engaged with her and the Caledonia, was, according to Commodore Barclay, "a perfect wreck, and the Queen Charlotte in a condition but little better." The Niagara, when Perry went aboard her, was so entirely unhurt in steerage, spars, rigging, sails and battery, that, without stopping a minute to repair, Perry immediately made signal for close action to the vessels astern, and, packing on all sail, made his successful dash for the enemy's line.

The position of the gunboats at the time Elliott went after them is indicated relatively by the fact that a trumpet was not resorted to to order them up. The fact that Elliott went in person after them is quite indicative of their being a considerable distance away. They were astern of the Niagara, and in the same line with her, so that Elliott, when he had rowed to the most distant craft and then back to the Somers, was no nearer the enemy than the Niagara was when he left her.

"How long was Elliott in rowing twice over this distance?" asked Burges. "If it were but one half as far as the Lawrence was from the

Niagara, when Perry boarded that vessel, Elliott must have been fifteen minutes in those two movements. Where was Perry, in the Niagara, during that time? Let it be told by Midshipman Montgomery, one of Elliott's own witnesses. He says, 'the Detroit struck in fifteen minutes after Perry came on board the Niagara, and the Queen Charlotte a few minutes after.' If this be correct, Elliott had that instant reached the Somers."

In the log-book of the Lawrence for September 10, 1813, the record being made by Sailing-Master Taylor, within twenty-four hours after the action, appeared the following statement in the account of the battle: "Captain Perry made all sail with the Niagara, which hitherto had kept out of the action, and in fifteen minutes passed in among the British squadron."

In Captain Barclay's official letter announcing to his Government his defeat, he states that he perceived his opponent, the Lawrence, drop astern, and a boat pass from him to the Niagara, "which vessel was at this time perfectly fresh."

A naval court-martial was held at Portsmouth, England, in 1815, for the trial of Cap-

tain R. H. Barclay and his remaining officers and men for the loss of the squadron on Lake Erie. There is found in the court's findings the following passage: "The American Commodore was obliged to leave his ship and hoist his flag on another of his squadron, which had not been engaged and was making away." The quoted allegation made in this report that he was making away—and not anything contained in the official report of Commodore Perry, nor any charge made against him at home—induced Commodore Elliott to call for a court of inquiry. This court negatived the allegation of the British court-martial, that Elliott was making away from the battle, pronouncing that charge malicious and unfounded in fact. "On the contrary," stated the American report, "it has been proved to the satisfaction of this court that the enemy's ship, Queen Charlotte, bore off from the fire of the Niagara, commanded by Captain Elliott." Which must be acknowledged a most graceful administering of whitewash.

The inconsistency of which Commodore Perry was accused, because he gave a favorable account of Elliott's conduct in his report of the

battle, and later preferred charges against him of gross misconduct during the engagement, is adequately explained in his letter to the Secretary of the Navy, reproduced in Burges' work, accompanying the charges and requesting a court-martial. Perry states that during the course of the battle he was necessarily too much engaged to reflect deliberately upon the cause which induced Elliott to keep his vessel so distant from the Lawrence and the enemy. After the battle the commander could not allow himself to believe that an officer who had conducted himself so handsomely upon a former occasion (as he had been led to believe that Elliott had), could possibly be guilty of cowardice or treachery. Elliott's subsequent readiness to undertake the most minute services and his unfortunate position, which he accentuated to Perry, also had their weight. More than all else, the Commodore was actuated by a strong desire for entire harmony after the victory. If he omitted to name Elliott, or named him without credit, the Commodore might not only ruin that officer but occasion dissensions which he at that time judged would injure the service. As it was, his report was

far different from what the officers of his fleet had expected, but he entreated them to acquiesce in it, and even furnished Elliott with a favorable letter, of which he understood the latter had subsequently made an unjustifiable use. This first report, wrote the Commodore, he would willingly abide by, but Elliott's assailing of his (Perry's) own character, to repair his own, had rendered this impossible. He had long been aware of Elliott's private intrigues against him, and had said nothing, but had declared to his friends that if Elliott ever gave publicity to his misrepresentations the Commodore would demand an investigation of the whole of his conduct. This necessity was now forced upon him. "Believing my hands to be bound," writes the Commodore, "and even braving me with the very certificate afforded to him in charity, this officer at last addresses directly to myself, and claims my acquiescence in the grossest misrepresentations —not only of his own conduct on Lake Erie, but of conduct and declarations which he imputes to me." In conclusion Perry states that because of the dissatisfaction such inquiries into the conduct of officers must entail, he had

avoided asking for the investigation just as long as he possibly could with any justice to the service or to his own character.

The charges preferred by Perry against Elliott included the allegation that he did not on the day of the battle use his utmost exertion to carry into execution the orders of his commanding officer; that for two hours and over he kept his vessel nearly a mile astern of the Lawrence, and more than that distance from the whole of the enemy's fleet, despite the trumpeted order at the beginning of the action to engage closely; that he failed to relieve the Lawrence in her time of need, and that, by his failure to follow orders, the Queen Charlotte was enabled to unite her force with that of the Detroit against the Lawrence.

It was charged, too, that Elliott, about October 1, 1813, on board the Scorpion, commanded by Sailing-Master Champlin, then on Lake St. Clair, in Champlin's hearing abused Commodore Perry, declaring that he, Elliott, had had it in his power to destroy the fleet and Perry with it, and regretting that he had not done so. Elliott was alleged to have uttered similar pleasant sentiments at Buffalo in No-

vember and December of that year. Some correspondence between Perry and Elliott, which has been published, places the latter in anything but a favorable light, and one can feel only regret that a man whose previous record had been by no means destitute of gallantry, could, through palpable rancor and jealousy, have later played the part he did.

Affidavits secured from the officers of Perry's fleet showed a unanimity of opinion in regard to Elliott's actions during the battle which was by no means creditable to that officer. Among them were relations of statements made by Elliott to the signers, after the battle, to the effect that Perry, in despair, had thrown overboard his fighting flag, which had been picked up by another officer; that Perry, when he came aboard the Niagara, was in despair, and was only prevented from surrendering the fleet by Elliott's firmness; that the Niagara had been in the thick of the action throughout the battle, and sundry other ridiculous controversions of stirring and established facts. Several of the officers rehearsed, too, an account emanating from the Somers, which Elliott boarded after going to bring up the gunboats,

which was rather unfavorable to the Captain. The report was that he had beaten the captain of the Somers' gun very severely with a speaking trumpet for having laughed at Elliott's dodging a shot from the enemy which passed over the boat.

Because of the absence upon the Mediterranean station of a number of material witnesses. the court of inquiry asked for in Perry's letter, referred to above, could not be convened till Perry sailed upon the cruise which terminated his life.

In conclusion, it is but necessary to observe that the world has forgotten that once upon a time another than Perry laid claim to Erie's bays; so utterly forgotten that to many a reader these dry bones of a dead controversy, for the moment exhumed, will wear the transitory aspect of life revived, for that a single name glows luminously among the annals of that memorable September day; a name that is tradition's heritage; the name of Perry.

CHAPTER VIII

AFTER THE BATTLE

HARRISON and Perry lost no time in following up the signal advantage obtained by the naval victory upon Lake Erie. When the vessels had finished landing the prisoners and wounded, they were employed in transporting troops from Fort Meigs and the Portage River and concentrating them at Put-in Bay. On September 22 Commodore Perry landed about 1,200 of the troops on a small island near Malden. The next day they debarked upon the Canadian shore a little below that town. An hour after the soldiers landed, Harrison took possession of the town, which the British had evacuated after burning Fort Malden, the navy yard, barracks and public storehouses. Proctor and his force fled to Sandwich. Harrison hurried after him, but Proctor pursued his retreat to the Moravian town, on the Thames, eighty miles from Detroit. Michigan had finally wholly

reverted to America. On October 2, Harrison, accompanied by Perry, who had volunteered as his aide-de-camp, left Sandwich, pursuing Proctor with a force of 3,500 men. They reached the Thames that evening and crossed by a bridge which Proctor had not chanced to destroy. On October 4 they dispersed a large force of Indians drawn up at a branch of the Thames to prevent the Americans from repairing a bridge that had been taken up, and there found that the enemy were but a few miles ahead. The Americans pursued them in hot haste, finding conflagrations all along the line of march, the British setting fire to what they could not save. On the afternoon of the 5th, the advance guard came up with the enemy, who were formed in a strong position across the line of march. A brief battle followed, in which Perry figured as one of Harrison's aides. As a result of Harrison's admirable arrangements, the Americans were signally victorious, the enemy being routed. There were 600 British regulars taken prisoners, twelve killed and twenty-two wounded. Proctor escaped with forty dragoons and a number of mounted Indians. The Indians sustained severe losses.

There were thirty-three of them found dead upon the field and many were killed while retreating. Six pieces of brass ordnance were taken, of which three were trophies of the Revolutionary War, being originally taken from the British at Yorktown and Saratoga, and subsequently surrendered by Hull at Detroit. Other munitions were taken. The Indians engaged in the battle were estimated to number about 1,000. It was in this battle of the Thames that Tecumseh, to whom none can deny the attributes of greatness, met his end. While desperately wounded, says an account, he aimed a weapon at Colonel Johnson, who was himself suffering from a serious injury. The Colonel, swiftly drawing his pistol, succeeded in anticipating the chief's shot, killing him outright. The principles for which this remarkable savage fought were never more clearly enunciated than in the speech which he made to "his Father," Proctor, when urging him to make a stand at Amherstburg, and refrain from "seeking safety in flight," an appeal that was unheeded. Tecumseh said:

"Father! you have got the arms and ammunition which our great father sent for his

red children. If you have an idea of going away, give them to us, and you may go and welcome. Our lives are in the hands of the Great Spirit. We are determined to defend our lands, and, if it be His will, we wish to leave our bones upon them."

The question has been seriously raised in certain quarters whether the Indian killed by Johnson was really Tecumseh. Some have said that it was another, of lesser note, who met his doom at Johnson's hands. But however this may be, no doubt exists that Tecumseh was killed during the action and his body was borne quietly away by his braves.

In his report of the action, Harrison wrote, "Commodore Perry and General Cass assisted me in forming the troops for action. The former is an officer of the highest merit. The appearance of the brave Commodore cheered and animated every breast."

The Thames victory definitely terminated the war on the Northwestern frontier, ending a bloody record of fifteen months. The red allies of the British were done with warfare. After the Americans had regained the control of Michigan a number of the hostile tribes sued for

peace, and brought in hostages for good behavior. Others quickly followed them, treating with the Americans at Detroit. Their peace proposals were accepted by General McArthur, in command there, on condition that "they should take hold of the same tomahawk with the Americans and strike all who are or may be enemies of the United States, whether British or Indians."

After the Thames action, the American army returned to Detroit, where, on October 16, Harrison issued a proclamation of amnesty to the peace-seeking Indian tribes. The whites were enjoined from any depredations upon the redskins. The following day a proclamation was issued by Harrison and Perry, dated at Sandwich, stating in effect that a government of amnesty should prevail over the conquered British colonies for such time as American arms should remain in possession of the District of Upper Canada.

Harrison and Perry left Detroit in the Ariel and arrived at Erie October 22. Public joy was naturally unconfined. Celebrations were continuous. The gallant pair were hailed as the deliverers of the frontier. From Erie, with

a part of the squadron, consisting of the Niagara, Caledonia, Hunter, Ariel, Lady Prevost, Trippe and Little Belt, having aboard 2,000 troops, they sailed for Buffalo, where they arrived on the 24th. In compliance with orders from Washington, Harrison proceeded with the troops from Buffalo to Sackets Harbor.

The campaign on Ontario that year may be dismissed with a few words. Wilkinson, with a large force, sailed from Sackets Harbor early in November. A destructive gale caused the squadron to rendezvous at Grenadier Island in demoralized order. A force under Hampton was to march from Chateaugay and finally join Wilkinson's army in a concentrated attack upon Montreal. Some engagements ensued, but Wilkinson's delay in starting was fatal to the enterprise, as far as his force was concerned, heavy gales playing havoc with the project. The troops finally landed on Canadian soil and the Battle of Williamsburgh was fought with honors easy. The Americans proceeded some distance further down the St. Lawrence, but Hampton, it was learned, had put back, and the campaign ended in a dreary fizzle.

Those in charge of it were for some time engaged in a controversy over the question of responsibility for failure, and some court-martials and relieving of commands ensued.

The naval contest on Ontario that year, between Chauncey and Yeo, resulted in nothing decisive. There was a brush at long range the day after Perry's victory; Yeo, by his own confession, sailing away after a few shots had been fired. On September 28 occurred another engagement. The Americans assumed the aggressive and knocked over some masts that in falling killed a number of the enemy. Yeo then made sail to escape the opposing fleet.

"Having chased the British into Burlington Bay," records Spears, "Commodore Chauncey missed the one great opportunity of his lifetime. Burlington Bay was undefended. Had he sailed boldly in after the demoralized British, there was every hope of a triumph as complete as that of Perry on Lake Erie. But Chauncey did not sail in. He said he was afraid it would come on to blow and he would be caught on a lee shore. That he was afraid of something is undisputed. Chauncey, however, did now have command of the lake, and a few days later

retook the Julia and the Growler that Yeo had captured at the head of the lake, and took also the British schooners Mary, Drummond and Lady Gore. These five were transporting troops along the lake shore. Yeo got his war ships into Kingston and Chauncey kept them there.

"On the whole, the British had undisputed control of Lake Ontario during forty-eight days. There was a sort of contest for the control lasting sixty-nine days, and the Americans held undisputed control for 107 days of the open season of 1813."

Considering the difference in resources between the naval captains of Erie and Ontario, the record made on the latter cannot be considered of a blood-stirring order.

Naturally the news of the victory of Erie caused universal joy throughout the nation. Illuminations and popular demonstrations occured in numberless cities and towns. The President appointed Perry to the rank of Captain in the navy. He was presented with the freedom of the cities of New York and Albany. The thanks of Congress were voted to the Commodore, his officers, seamen and marines, and

medals were presented to him and his officers. The City of Philadelphia held a notable celebration, and the thanks of the Senate of Pennsylvania, with medals, were voted to the Commodore and his men. The citizens of Boston gave valuable presents, and a long list could be made of similar honors and observances.

Perry left Harrison at Buffalo, and started for Albany, where he arrived November 8. He was received by the city officials with honors and was presented with the freedom of the city in a gold case, and a sword, voted him by the Common Council. He then proceeded to his home at Newport, R. I., accompanied by his brother and the four tars who had rowed him from the Lawrence to the Niagara. The imagination can readily picture the nature of his reception at home.

The Commodore left Newport early in January, 1814, for New York, where, on the 11th, he was sumptuously entertained in Tammany Hall. He proposed a toast on this occasion which was strikingly indicative of his own uncompromising position in those days of warring factions. It was, "The Union of the States." Perry proceeded to Washington, where he was

officially and suitably entertained. After a few days at the capital, Perry left for home, stopping at Baltimore, where one of the most signal ovations of his career awaited him. The popular idol now returned to Newport, having at that time a command on that station. He continued there during the spring and summer following. It was in effect a period of repose, for there was but little for him to do. Historians have not been lacking who have recorded their regrets that the Government did not see fit during that year to sever the strands of red tape sufficiently to place the victor of Erie in command of the squadron on Ontario, it being shrewdly surmised that, had this been done, the record on those waters for 1814 would have been anything but of an indeterminate nature. As it was, Perry appeared no more on the waters of the north, and, though many additions rendered the opposing fleets on Ontario more formidable than at any previous time during the war, the "struggle" closed on that lake with the long drawn-out issue undecided.

Some few incidents, however, occurred to break the monotony of service at Newport. On May

30 a Swedish brig was chased into the eastern passage at Newport and run ashore by the boats of a British war vessel. Perry was apprised, and at once ordered a detachment of seamen, with a 6-pounder, to the assistance of the brig. Some militia accompanied them. The next morning the British brig Nimrod stood close in shore, drove the crew out of the Swedish vessel and succeeded in boarding and setting her on fire. The Americans arrived opportunely and the British vessel hastily weighed anchor and set out to sea. The Americans put out the fire and saved most of the Swedish ship's cargo.

During the summer of 1814, the eastern coast of the country was greatly harassed by the British. They destroyed shipping interests and entered ports and committed depredations. To repel expected attacks Perry proceeded to the eastward. He was at Wiscasset late in June, when the enemy attacked the place. Perry had meanwhile organized a resistance which repelled the British.

On June 21 Perry received a communication from inhabitants of Wareham, Mass., telling of outrages committed by the enemy, who had

entered the port under a flag of truce. At the request of these citizens, the Commodore transmitted a report of the transaction to the Secretary of the Navy.

The capture of Washington by the British, on August 24, induced Commodore Perry to repair thither. The action at Bladensburg, on the afternoon of the 24th, having resulted in the retreat of the American troops, the enemy marched to the capital without experiencing further opposition. The forces in this battle were about equal in figures, 5,000 each, but the British had mostly regulars, while the larger part of the American troops were militiamen. The latter were too easily discouraged, though the 350 regulars made a better record. Commodore Barney, the hero of two wars, made a brave stand with his volunteers, but was wounded and made a prisoner. The occupancy of Washington on this day by Ross' troops, the burning of public buildings, and the departure of the British the following day, are too well known to require repetition.

Soon after this, several distinguished naval officers, among whom were Rodgers, Porter and Perry, arrived in Washington. After the British

retreat from Washington, a part of the enemy's naval force went up the Potomac to Alexandria and threatened the destruction of that town. The abandonment and destruction of Fort Warburton had removed all obstructions to their passage up the river. The citizens were forced to agree to a capitulation, by which all naval and ordnance stores, together with the shipping in the harbor (including some sunken vessels which the citizens were to raise), and all merchandise, were to be delivered to the enemy. Refreshments of every description were to be supplied to the ships and paid for, at the market price, by bills on the British Government. It needed but this last touch to add the climax to the irony of the situation.

While the British were plundering the unfortunate town at their leisure, preparations were afoot to annoy them upon their descending the river. Commodore Rodgers proceeded down the Potomac, September 3, with fire ships, meant for some of the enemy's ships lying below Alexandria, but the wind failed, and this enterprise did not succeed. Similar attempts, made subsequently, failed for the same reason. Captain Porter erected a temporary battery at

the White House, on the west bank of the river, to destroy some of the enemy's vessels which were due to pass down the river. He was assisted by several officers and a body of militia. On September 4 and 5 the enemy fired continually upon the battery, and made a night attack to spike the guns, but were repulsed. The enemy's force moved down the river the next day and the battery injured them severely, though they succeeded in getting away with their plunder. The fire was severe on both sides for an hour. Commodore Perry commanded a battery at Indian Head, below that at the White House. The cannon were of too small a caliber to make much impression on the enemy as they descended the river. Perry's position was advantageous and his party was only slightly injured by the British. Only one man was wounded. None were killed.

When the British had gotten away, Rodgers and Perry immediately proceeded to Baltimore, a speedy attack being expected upon that place.

On the morning of September 11 the enemy's fleet, containing forty or fifty vessels, appeared off the mouth of the Patapsco River. Some of

the ships entered the stream and others proceeded to North Point. The following night they began the debarkation of the troops, which was completed early the next morning. In the meantime, the frigates, which had been previously lightened, together with the bomb-ketches and small vessels, approached and arranged themselves in line of battle, to bombard the fort and town. The ships of the line lay off North Point, to protect the entire force. The enemy landed about 9,000 men, the forces comprising 5,000 soldiers, under Major-General Ross, and 4,000 marines and seamen, commanded by Admiral Cockburn. They marched four miles sans opposition, when they were met by a force of 3,200 men; General Stricker's brigade and several companies of volunteers, most of whom were from Pennsylvania. The remainder of the troops, which had been collected for defense, were stationed in the rear, and at various defenses. A warm engagement ensued, the Americans retiring slowly.

The next day the British advanced two miles further toward the town, but resistance was determined, and they retreated in the night and took to their boats. An attack by the

enemy's ships upon Fort McHenry was signally repulsed. The attack upon Baltimore, by a combined land and naval force, had failed. General Ross fell early in the action. The enemy's loss was about eight hundred, while Americans lost but twenty killed and about one hundred and forty wounded, taken prisoners and missing.

Among the enemy's objects at Baltimore was the destruction of the Java, then building there. This ship had been equipped and fitted for service by Commodore Perry, under official orders. The Commodore, however, continued in his Newport command, remaining there with his family a large portion of his time. His active career, as far as the War of 1812 was concerned, was finished.

CHAPTER IX

THE MEDITERRANEAN

IN January, 1815, Commodore Perry received a testimonial which he probably prized highly in the list of honors which had come to him, since it was from his own townspeople. It was in the form of a handsome silver vase, of large size, surmounted by an eagle, and appropriately engraved, the gift of his appreciative fellow-citizens of Newport.

He continued to command on the Newport station and to superintend the equipping of the Java during 1815. She, under his command, was intended to sail for the Mediterranean, as a part of the naval force ordered there by the American Government, the fleet to be commanded by Commodore Chauncey. Preparatory to commencing this cruise, the Java proceeded to Newport Harbor, remaining there for some time before sailing.

Early in the spring of 1816 Perry sailed in

the Java for the troublesome blue sea, it being his third cruise to those waters upon a martial mission. The principal object of the dispatching of the squadron at this time, was to keep alive the feeling of wholesome respect aroused in the Barbary States by previous armed demonstrations. Such an impression had been produced by a squadron under Commodore Decatur, which had sailed from New York, April 20, 1815, for the Mediterranean. The force consisted of the Guerriere, Constellation and Macedonian, frigates; Ontario and Epervier, sloops of war, and the Spark, Spitfire, Touch and Flambeau, schooners. It was expected that this squadron would be shortly followed by another, under Commodore Bainbridge. He was, upon his arrival, to assume command of the whole force, and Decatur was to return to the United States. The expedition was designed against the Dey of Algiers, Congress having declared war against that Regency immediately after the ratification of the treaty of peace with Great Britain. The cause for hostilities had existed for some time, but the war with Britain had provided a sufficiently large mouthful for Congress to masticate, so

the chastisement of the Algerine was deferred until that was disposed of.

In the treaty concluded between the United States and the Regency of Algiers, in 1795, the former, being put on the same footing as other nations, was to pay to the Dey the annual tribute of 12,000 Algerine sequins, to be invested in naval stores. No difficulties arose under this treaty, nor any infringment of it, upon the part of the Algerines, occurred till July, 1812, when the Dey violated its most important articles. The imminence of war between this country and England emboldened the Dey in his course of hostility toward the weaker nation. When the U. S. ship Alleghany arrived at Algiers in July, 1812, with a cargo of naval stores for the payment of the tribute, the Dey found fault with the consignment, commanded that the vessel leave Algiers, and that Colonel Lear, the American consul there, leave with it. Shortly afterward he coolly registered a claim of $27,000 for alleged arrearages of tribute, based for seventeen years on the difference between the Christian and Mahometan calendar years. The consul expostulated, his course resulting in a promise that, if the claim was

not paid, he would be imprisoned and placed in chains, the Alleghany and her cargo confiscated, and every American citizen in Algiers placed in slavery. Colonel Lear, it being the only available course, succeeded in raising the amount, which he paid the amiable ruler, and, with his family and twenty other Americans, embarked on board the Alleghany for America. Their departure was followed by an immediate commencement of depredations upon American commerce in those waters.

As soon as the issue with England was concluded, Congress, which had been chafing under this intolerable course, set about paying off scores, declaring war against the piratical Regency.

Decatur's squadron arrived at Gibraltar May 15. He was informed there that the Algerine squadron, which had been out in the Atlantic, had passed up the straits and the news of his arrival been received at Algiers. Decatur proceeded at once up the Mediterranean, hoping to intercept the enemy's squadron before it could return to Algiers, or gain a neutral port. He partially realized his object. The Guerriere fell in with the Algerine frigate Mazouda, June 17,

off Cape de Gatt, and captured her after a running engagement of twenty-five minutes. The Algerine crew fired two broadsides and then ran below. Thirty of them were killed, including Admiral Hammida, long a terror of those waters. Four hundred and six prisoners were taken. Four members of the Guerriere's crew were wounded. Two days later, off Cape Palos, the American squadron fell in with an Algerine brig, which they captured. The squadron then proceeded to Algiers, reaching there June 28. Decatur captured a frigate and a brig of the enemy's squadron. Supposing the remainder had put into some neutral port, he judged it a favorable time to open negotiations, so sent the Dey a letter from the President. The captain of the port, with the Swedish consul, was soon sent to the Guerriere to further the negotiation. Decatur and Mr. Shaler, who had been authorized to negotiate a treaty, proposed the only basis upon which an adjustment could be made, which was the absolute relinquishment of any demand of tribute on the part of the regency, on any pretext whatever. The Dey's agent demurred, but on learning of the fate of Hammida, became unnerved and agreed to the

Americans' proposal, submitting, however, that he was not then authorized to conclude a treaty, but requesting the American commissioners to name their terms. Some days of negotiations followed, the Algerines squirming, but the Americans refusing to yield a single point. The latter won, and the Dey signed the treaty, which renounced claims to tribute, provided for the liberation of American prisoners without ransom, for compensation to this nation for vessels seized and detained, and for many other things then necessary to the commercial comfort of the United States in those harried waters.

Commodore Decatur dispatched the Epervier, with the treaty, to the United States, and sailed with the rest of the squadron to Tunis. Shaler was left at Algiers as Consul-General to the Barbary States. A misunderstanding between the American consul and the Bashaw at Tunis occasioned this visit. Upon his arrival Decatur was informed by the American consul that the Bashaw had violated the treaty, during the war between the United States and Great Britain, by permitting two prizes, captured by an American privateer, to be taken out of the harbor

at Tunis by a British cruiser; and also in permitting a company of merchants, the Bashaw's own subjects, to take the property of an American citizen at their own price, which, needless to say, was a small one. Decatur officially substantiated the facts and demanded immediate satisfaction. The Prime Minister acknowledged the justice of the claim, but wanted a year in which to pay the money demanded. Decatur peremptorily refused, and was then assured that payment would be made at once. He went on shore and received visits from the various consuls. The money was paid by a brother of the Prime Minister, who observed Commodore Decatur in conversation with the British consul. He threw down the money bags and upbraided the consul, accusing his Government first of violating neutrality, and then leaving the victims to pay for the aggressions or be destroyed. The Bashaw later proposed to send a minister to England to demand restitution of the money he had been obliged to pay.

Having finished with Tunis, Decatur proceeded to Tripoli, which had also violated its treaty with the United States, in having permitted two American vessels to be taken by a British

sloop of war, from under the guns of the castle, and in refusing protection to an American cruiser lying within its waters. Satisfaction was demanded in the sum of $25,000. The Bashaw's memory was conveniently long. He remembered the former war with the Americans and an immediate order issued that the sum required be paid to the American consul. Decatur procured the release of some captives of various nationalities, and, late in August, the squadron sailed for Carthagena. Failing to meet there the reinforcement of the second division of the fleet, under Bainbridge, Decatur proceeded to Gibraltar. There the divisions united, and Decatur, after a most honorable record, turned over the command to Bainbridge, and, boarding the Guerriere, returned to the United States. Bainbridge exhibited his formidable fleet before Tunis, Tripoli and Algiers, the demonstration of force being intended to produce a desirable effect, after which the squadron returned to America, reaching Boston November 15, 1815, three days before the arrival of the Guerriere. The expedition had been most successful. Demands had been acceded to with the exercise of but little force. The lawless Barbary States

had been overawed, past experience exercising potent power in impelling a proper appreciation of this nation's prestige. The appearance of so large a squadron in their waters, flying the American flag so soon after the war with Great Britain, had a sobering influence upon these freebooters of the Mediterranean. It was in the nature of a disagreeable shock and speedily produced the results hoped for.

It was for the purpose of intensifying this wholesome impression that the Java and the rest of the squadron under Commodore Chauncey was sent out the next year. The treaty concluded by Commodore Decatur, having been ratified by the American Government, was carried in the Java, to be exchanged for the unratified treaty. The Java arrived at Port Mahon, where that portion of the first squadron which had not yet returned to the United States had made their winter quarters. On April 5 the Java, Constellation, Erie and John Adams left there and sailed to Algiers, where they found an English fleet, under Lord Exmouth, anchored in the bay in battle order, abreast of the batteries. The English admiral demanded the unconditional liberation of all

Christian slaves. This was refused, and negotiations proceeded later upon a financial basis.

The Americans proceeded to negotiations with the elusive pirate power on their own account. The Dey affected to consider the ratified treaty entirely a new one, and coquetted with the situation in the inimitable way of those troublesome States, whose rulers it seemed absolutely impossible to pin down to tangibilities. The Dey complained that he had not been treated justly in many particulars, and the negotiations ended without result. Algiers' Prime Minister waxed insulting the following day, and returned the treaty. Mr. Shaler, the American consul, now deemed it prudent to withdraw from the city and took up his residence on board the frigate United States.

It was time to again remind the slippery Dey of the long arms of the young nation over-sea, and earnest presentments were made to him of what would occur if he failed to do what was equitable in the matter. The result was that after four days more of negotiation, under a flag of truce, the Dey, again oppressed with a wholesome recollection of the past, re-acknowledged the treaty, and promised to wait till

instructions could be received from the President of the United States regarding the points in dispute. That part of the American squadron which appeared before Algiers was under the immediate command of Commodore Shaw. When the negotiations were ended, the squadron sailed for Barcelona, with the exception of the John Adams, which returned to America.

During the stay in the Mediterranean a controversy arose in September between Commodore Perry and John Heath, Captain of marines on board the Java. The circumstances were related by Commodore Perry in a letter written from the Java to his commanding officer, Commodore Chauncey, requesting an inquiry into his own conduct. The Commodore wrote that on the evening of September 16, while the Java lay at anchor in the Harbor of Messina, two of her marines jumped into the sea and swam to the shore. Captain Heath was summoned by the Commodore, but delayed deliberately in coming on deck, and, when ordered to muster the marines, responded in so indifferent a manner that Perry told him to go below and suspend his duties aboard the Java. Two evenings later Heath left a disrespectful letter in his

superior's cabin. Perry summoned him and inquired the reasons for his course. He assumed a manner "irritating and contemptuous" and launched a lengthy, insolent tirade at the Commodore. Perry ordered him to be silent and summoned a marine officer to arrest him. The flood of invective continued, and, before the summoned officer arrived, Perry struck the Captain. The Commodore was mortified at so far forgetting himself, and offered an apology, which was refused. The ensuing court-martial, which tried the two men, found that both had been somewhat hasty. Captain Heath was found guilty of disrespectful, insolent and contemptuous conduct toward Captain Perry, his superior officer, and of disobedience to his orders. Perry was found guilty of having used improper language and of striking Captain Heath.

The Dey of Algiers soon showed evidence of desire to become slippery again, and so, on Christmas Day, 1816, Commodore Chauncey concluded another treaty with him that reiterated more strongly the principal features of Decatur's treaty. After this the Java and the Ontario (sloop of war) sailed for the United

States, leaving the rest of the squadron at Port Mahon. The Java arrived at Newport early in March, 1817, bearing dispatches from Commodore Chauncey. The Ontario proceeded to Annapolis.

Commodore Perry remained at Newport. The next June, together with Commodore Bainbridge and Captain Evans, he was appointed by the President to survey and examine Newport Harbor, to determine its advantages as a site for a naval depot. In July Perry retired from the command of the Java, whose officers presented him with an earnest address of regret at his retirement. Perry resumed the command of the Newport station during the remainder of this and a part of the ensuing year.

There was still another incident to occur in the Commodore's controversy with Captain Heath. Heath visited Rhode Island early in October, 1818, and dispatched Perry a communication in which he demanded satisfaction for his alleged injury when in the Mediterranean. The men would have met then, but the State authorities interfered. Commodore Perry then agreed to go on to Washington to accommo-

date Heath. The following note, which was indorsed on the preliminary arrangement regarding the meeting, explains Perry's attitude:

"Captain Perry desires it explicitly understood that in according to Captain Heath the personal satisfaction he has demanded, he has been influenced entirely by a sense of what he considers due from him, as an atonement to the violated rules of the service, and not by any considerations of the claims which Captain Heath may have for making such a demand, which he totally denies, as such claims have been forfeited by the measures of a public character, which Captain Heath has adopted toward him. If, therefore, the civil authority should produce an impossibility of meeting at the time and place designed, which he will take every precaution to prevent, he will consider himself absolutely exonerated from any responsibility to Captain Heath, touching their present cause of difference."

This was signed by the seconds of the men. Before this, in January, 1818, Perry had written Commodore Decatur in similar vein, stating that he had determined, because he had violated the rules of the service, to give Heath a meeting in case that officer called upon him, but adding

that he could not consent to return his fire, as the meeting would on his own part be entirely an atonement for the violated regulations. At the same time he asked Decatur to act as his friend, should the meeting take place.

The meeting occurred October 19, on the Jersey shore of the Hudson. There Perry received the fire of Captain Heath without returning it, when Decatur stepped forward and declared that Perry came to the ground with a determination not to return Heath's shot. He read Perry's letter, alluded to, and added that he presumed Captain Heath was satisfied. Heath acquiesced, and the principals and other members of the party returned to New York.

CHAPTER X

THE LAST CRUISE

IN the summer of 1819, Commodore Perry was ordered on an expedition to South America. In June he sailed from Norfolk, Virginia, with the John Adams, ship of war, and the schooner Nonsuch, for Angostura, on the Orinoco River, the capital of the Republic of Venezuela. The Commodore arrived at the River Orinoco July 13. He had difficulty in locating its mouth, then little known to mariners and not laid down correctly in any American charts. There was a bar at the mouth of the great stream which precluded vessels drawing more than sixteen feet of water from passing over it. A pilot was procured, he being brought aboard in a canoe paddled by the wretched Indians of that region. The Nonsuch proceeded up the river, the John Adams remaining behind.

It was a wild, picturesque region through which the Nonsuch passed. For 200 miles from its mouth, record the old historians, the

stream's shores were uninhabited, owing to the serious inundations to which they were constantly subjected. The banks were grown densely with live oak, mahogany, cocoanut and other trees. Such was the depth of the river close inshore, that the Nonsuch was frequently tied to a tree, where the men could readily jump from the deck to dry land. The ship proceeded on, through monotonous solitary miles, through days that swam in tropic heat, through nights that were weird with the strange cries of the creatures of the forest. After an interminable time, marked by the dragging dial of loneliness, the vessel passed the Indian village of Sanchopan, on the left bank of the river, with its regular streets and buildings of clay and palmetto leaves. Thirty miles above was encountered the village of Baranchas, comprised of a dozen houses. It was the rendezvous of the patriot force's naval outfit upon the river, which consisted of four gunboats, mustering a total armament of one pathetic gun and a combined crew of fifty men. Commodore Padisea, the commander of the station, boarded the boat at this point. The Nonsuch proceeded, passing Guyana, 100 miles below Angostura,

with its fifty houses thatched and painted red, its ruinous fort at the foot of a hill, with five guns; its dilapidated castle on the summit, with four. Passing St. Michael with its twenty houses, immediately below Angostura, the Nonsuch finally reached the latter town, firing a salute of eighteen guns. The artillery of the place boomed a welcome in reply, and Commodore Perry and his officers went ashore, being received by the Vice-President with much state.

Angostura's location was more than 300 miles from the sea. Being at the head of sloop navigation, and situated upon the declivity of a hill, the visiting Americans viewed it with great interest. The buildings were mainly of brick, the houses one story high, with tiled roofs and wooden gratings, the mild weather rendering unnecessary any provision against cold. The town contained 10,000 inhabitants, a considerable number of whom were creoles and the residue Spaniards and Europeans.

Then, as interminably since, Venezuela's affairs were troublous. In 1811 a considerable part of the territory now known by that name declared itself independent of Spain. With great difficulty it made good the declaration, till

1815, when, and the year following, a considerable part, both of Venezuela and New Granada, was reconquered by the Spanish General, Morillo. In 1817, the spirit of independence reasserted itself, and the next year a systematic republican government was established at Angostura, with Bolivar at its head as President and Commander of the Armies. The United States recognized the Government, sending a mission to it in 1818, and another, by Perry, in 1819.

The Commodore was received with respectful official attention at Angostura. On August 14, a few days after his arrival, he and the other officers of the Nonsuch, received an invitation to dine with the Vice-President. The following day, a Sunday, the new Constitution of the republic was adopted and signed, amid the booming of cannon. The republic then had at its disposal an entire fleet of 20 vessels, consisting of brigs, schooners and gunboats.

Commodore Perry discharged his Government's business with the South American republic to the entire satisfaction of all concerned, and departed, descending the river in a tender, the Nonsuch having left previously. Accounts

state that his health was good when leaving Angostura, but upon reaching the bar at the mouth of the Orinoco, he was suffering slightly from an attack of fever. He boarded the Nonsuch, which was in waiting, and the schooner set sail for Port of Spain, in the Island of Trinidad, for which point the John Adams had previously sailed. After boarding the schooner Perry's illness grew rapidly worse, the fever increasing daily. It played havoc with his splendid, vigorous frame, and the anxious crew knew too well that the grasp of disease was deadly. Every attempt was made to hasten to Port of Spain, where adequate attendance could be had, but in spite of all efforts, the passage occupied more than five days. The Nonsuch finally anchored in the gulf. The fever had reached an alarming crisis. Perry was tenderly removed to the ship of war John Adams, which was in waiting. A quarter of an hour later, in the evening of August 23 (his birthday), 1819, after thirty-four years of a life whose record spelled heroism and well-doing, the grisly hand of death stilled the beating of the great, stout heart, and the intrepid soul passed out through the shadows into the Unseen.

As the gallantry which inspired his life, so the dignity and fortitude with which he met the inevitable end; the slipping out into the mists of the Unknown. Clear-eyed and sanely conscious at the last, he met the grim visitor with the imperturbability shown on that memorable day, years gone, upon the wide water in the northland, when for hours he faced death unmoved, death that seemed miraculously diverted. That day, years gone, when Death, so subtly ironical in his dealings with the dust of the quickened flesh, passed the hero by with but the ominous shadow of black, beating wings, to finally reach out, when peace was compassed and ere the sun of the great life had reached its meridian, to claim his silent own!

Alone, with kindred afar, near shores of a nation whose subjugation upon the wide water to the Northward had won for him an undying fame, the Commodore passed away. His mourning officers prepared to convey his remains to the land he loved, but it could not then be done. So, on the ensuing day, at five in the afternoon, a boat left the John Adams, amid the booming of minute guns, a boat in which lay the inert form of the dead commander. It

drew near to the King's Wharf, where the Third West India Regiment was in waiting, and, as the body was removed to the wharf, solemn minute guns roared out from Fort St. Andrew. The cortege was formed, headed by the civil authorities and the troops of that nation which now paid honors to the heroic dead with whom its sons had warred; and, with the regimental band playing the Dead March from Saul, the officers of the American vessels, the crews and citizens of the town—which latter were to subsequently erect a monument in Port of Spain to the Commodore's memory—marching two and two, the body was borne slowly to the cemetery. There prayers were read by clergy, and the troops fired parting volleys of musketry ere they left him to rest from his labors.

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Seven years later the United States sloop of war Lexington visited Port of Spain, in the Island of Trinidad. When she quitted it, drawing out again into the deep, she bore a precious burden, a nation's heritage of honored dust. Steadily she sped long leagues to the northward, where the nation waited to receive its own. The days grew gray and the air more

chill as she pushed to the north, for it was late autumn. And finally, on the 27th of November, the vessel entered the harbor of that Newport her slumbering passenger had loved so well, that spot of God's earth which had held for him, living, the dear bourne of home, and whose silent city was now to hold him dead.

On Monday, December 4, the body was interred, with befitting honors, in the Island cemetery, where the State of Rhode Island afterward caused to be erected a monument of granite to his memory. It stands upon a grassy mound, at the west side of the enclosure. The remains of the Commodore and the deceased of his family (whose members were amply provided for by Congress after the hero's death) rest at the base of the shaft.

So ends the record of a life well lived, of a country well served. It is a record which, epitomized, spells but a simple, unswerving devotion to duty; patriotism and absolute courage that led to glorious achievement and the winning of a deathless name; indomitable perseverance that made molehills of mountainous obstacles; splendid, all-conquering zeal that rendered the human weaknesses, to which all

flesh is heir, insignificant and unnoted in the grand ensemble of the man. It was such a life as lives in glowing example through the unnumbered ensuing generations of any favored nation which can boast such sons; a life whose record fires the eye, and awakens such a glorious thrill as comes with the sight of the flinging to the breeze of that flag whose crimson stripes suggest, so eloquently, the blood of uncounted martyrs shed in its preservation; a life of such splendid scope and power and fullness as to transmit most potently, through the sum of rolling ages, those throbbing, heroic traditions which are the nation's heritage.